



SEP 29 2014

Indian Health Service
Rockville MD 20852

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to update you on our work to develop a policy on conferring with Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs). In March 2010, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) was reauthorized and amended as part of the Affordable Care Act and one of the changes made was to create a new requirement that the Indian Health Service (IHS) confer with UIOs, to the maximum extent practicable, in carrying out the IHCIA. A formal conferring policy can be used to ensure that the health needs of the urban Indian population are considered at the local, Area, and national levels when implementing and carrying out the IHCIA.

On July 26, 2012, IHS posted a *Federal Register Notice* that contained a *Draft Policy on Conferring with Urban Indian Organizations* for public comment and encouraged input and recommendations. IHS also requested consultation by Tribes on the draft policy. IHS held a listening session on the draft policy on January 22, 2013 as well.

I would like to thank you for your input and recommendations on the draft policy. IHS has been reviewing and considering all comments since the public comment period closed, and has revised the draft policy to incorporate comments and recommendations.

Therefore, I am writing to notify you that the *Federal Register* will publish a notice this week on the new *IHS Policy on Conferring with Urban Indian Organizations*. Once it is posted, IHS will also post it on our website. This policy will help formally start the confer process with UIOs for IHS, and can serve as a venue for discussion if further changes or revisions are needed in the future. I fully anticipate that as we implement this policy, we may find opportunities to change and improve the policy over time. We also believe that continued dialogue with Tribal leadership on this issue is essential as we move forward with implementing this policy.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact CAPT Chris Buchanan, Director, Office of Direct Service and Contracting Tribes, at (301) 443-1104, or Mr. Benjamin Smith, Director, Office of Tribal Self Governance, at (301) 443-7821.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we implement the new *IHS Policy for Conferring with Urban Indian Organizations*.

Sincerely,

/Yvette Roubideaux/

Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H.
Acting Director