The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

A Resolution Requesting Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service

Resolution No. 14-05

Bill John Baker
Principal Chief

Bill Anoatubby
Governor

Gregory Pyle
Principal Chief

George Tiger
Principal Chief

Leonard M. Harjo
Principal Chief

WHEREAS, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (ITC) is an organization that unites the Tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations, representing over 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the federal government has a solemn, legal responsibility to provide American Indians with health care as established through the U.S. Constitution, treaties with Indian Tribes, U.S. Supreme Court decisions and federal legislation; and,

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Service (IHS) has long been underfunded at only 56 percent of need annually; and,

WHEREAS, American Indians suffer from among the lowest health status nationally; and, Tribal health care delivery; and,

WHEREAS, the lateness in enacting a final budget ranges from five days (FY 2002) to 197 days (FY 2011), making quality budget planning almost impossible, this Council requests that IHS process the payments to Tribes in a timely manner; and,

WHEREAS, since 1998, there has only been one year (FY2006) in which the Interior, Environmental and Related Agencies Appropriations bill has been enacted before the beginning of the new fiscal year; and,

WHEREAS, the clearest budgetary solution to this failure to uphold the federal trust responsibility is advance appropriations; and,

WHEREAS, IHS should be afforded the same budgetary certainty which covers the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is another federally-funded provider of health care; and,

WHEREAS, this Council asserts that moving to the advance appropriations process would protect tribes and IHS from cash flow problems that chronically occur at the start of the federal fiscal year due to delays in enactment of appropriation legislation and last-minute budget cuts like those caused by sequestration and disastrous government shutdowns; and,

NOW THERFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes requests that Congress include our recommendation for IHS advance appropriations in the Budget Resolution and that Congress include in the enacted appropriations bill IHS advance appropriations.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting in Shawnee, Oklahoma on this 10th day of January, 2014, by a vote of 21 for 0 against and 0 abstentions.

Bill John Baker, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation

George Tiger, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Gregory E. Pyle, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Leonard M. Harjo, Principal Chief
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma

Bill Anoatubby, Governor
Chickasaw Nation