



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MKE-17-041

TITLE: Support for the Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) Expansion

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WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, AI/ANs have very limited access to health care services and are disproportionately affected by oral and behavioral health disparities and these disparities are directly attributed to the lack of health professionals in Indian communities, which has caused a serious access issue and backlog of many health services for AI/AN people; and

WHEREAS, many of our member Tribes have great difficulty and face significant challenges in recruiting health professionals to have in their communities that results in further challenges in ensuring continuity and comprehensive healthcare for AI/AN people; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) has been in existence since 1964 as a program of the Indian Health Service (IHS); and

WHEREAS, the federally authorized Community Health Aide Program Certification Board (CHAPCB) was established and charged with formalizing the process for maintaining the Community Health Aide/ Practitioner training and practice standards and procedures; and

WHEREAS, CHAP has been an effective method for diminishing the health disparities of Alaska Natives for promoting access to health services for Alaska Natives residing in rural and remote communities; and

WHEREAS, CHAP grows providers from within Tribal communities who provide patient-centered quality care that comes from providers that understand the history, culture, and language of their patients; and

WHEREAS, CHAP provides routine, preventative, and emergent health care through Community Health Aides (CHA/Ps), Behavioral Health Aides (BHA/Ps), and Dental Health Aide Providers (DHA/Ts); and

WHEREAS, CHAP providers provide continuity of care in communities that face recruitment and retention challenges; and

WHEREAS, the IHS issued a Dear Tribal Leader Letter on January 4, 2017 to announce that the IHS will begin the process of developing a formal policy and implementation plan to create a national CHAP under the provisions outlined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act as amended at 25 U.S.C. § 1616(d); and

WHEREAS, our member Tribes would benefit from expansion of the CHAP outside of Alaska.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) hereby supports expansion of the Community Health Aide Programs nationally in the areas of behavioral health, dental health aide therapists and other programs that support preventative culturally relevant treatment of tribal citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2017 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, WI, Oct 15, 2017 - Oct 20, 2017, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary