



Three Affiliated Tribes
MANDAN ★ HIDATSA ★ ARIKARA

Office of the Chairman
Marcus D. Wells, Jr. "Eh-Bah-Dah-Gish"
(Bald Eagle)

THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES

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October 22, 2007

Via Facsimile: 202-228-2589

The Honorable Byron L. Dorgan
Chair
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Request for Oversight Hearing on Contract Support Cost Issues


Dear Chairman Dorgan:

I write as Chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation to add our Tribe's support for an urgent oversight hearing on the "contract support cost" crisis now facing Indian Country. For the past several years, our Tribe has been under funded over \$400,000 annually in contract support costs, forcing us to reduce health care services to our people to make up for the shortfall. Without prompt Congressional action, the Tribe's CSC funding shortfall will only increase in future fiscal years given the Tribe's plan this coming year to contract the remaining IHS Program at Minne-Tohe Health Center.

Over two years ago the Supreme Court declared IHS's failure to pay to be illegal, and yet IHS continues. It is critical that Congress receive testimony on this important issue, so that corrective action can be taken and honor restored to the Government's execution of its trust responsibility. Absent such a correction, the Tribe's path to greater self-determination will be seriously compromised, as will the realization of Congress's goals in the Indian Self-Determination Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Very respectfully,


Marcus D. Wells, Jr., Chairman
THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES OF THE
FORT BERTHOLD RESERVATION