

# IHS TRIBAL SELF-GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

c/o Self-Governance Communication and Education

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Original sent via USPS

August 28, 2014

The Honorable Secretary Sylvia Burwell  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

## RE: IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee Priorities and Strategic Plan

Dear Secretary Burwell:

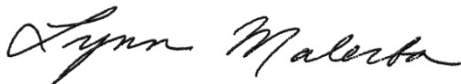
On behalf of the Indian Health Service (IHS) Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC), I am writing to follow up on the letter we sent you on July 7, 2014 (enclosed), with briefing materials on the top administrative, policy and budget priorities identified by the more than 340 Self-Governance Tribes, including:

- Expand Tribal Self-Governance within HHS
- Fix the hardship exemption implementation for IHS beneficiaries
- Align the definition of Indian to be used by HHS programs
- Improve American Indian and Alaska Native enrollment in Medicaid, Child Health Insurance Programs and Marketplace plans
- Funding for the IHS
- Contract Support Costs

We have seen progress in some areas, most noticeably the resolution of past claims for contract support costs. However, we are concerned about the growing crisis due to the backlog of applications for hardship exemptions for IHS beneficiaries from tax penalties for not having insurance. As we approach the open enrollment period for the Marketplace, we have not seen substantive policy changes that would increase AI/AN participation in Marketplace plans. We hope you share our sense of urgency, not only to assure that systems are working reliably to process exemptions from tax penalties in our Tribal communities, but also to work on important issues together during the remaining years of the Obama administration.

We look forward to working with you more closely in the future and reviewing your response to the recommendations in our letter of July 7, 2014. We stand ready to meet with you to discuss any of these issues. Please contact me at [lmalerba@moheganmail.com](mailto:lmalerba@moheganmail.com) if you have questions or would like to discuss any of the priorities in further detail. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Chief Lynn Malerba, Mohegan Tribe  
Chairwoman, TSGAC

Enclosure: (1) TSGAC Letter dated July 7, 2014.  
cc: Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H. Acting Director, IHS  
P. Benjamin Smith, Director, OTSG, IHS  
TSGAC and Technical Workgroup Members