



Self-Governance Communication & Education Tribal Consortium

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Sent electronically Mike_Andrews@indian.senate.gov; Anthony_Walters@indian.senate.gov

June 30, 2015

The Honorable John A. Barrasso
Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester
Vice-Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for Robert G. McSwain, Acting Director, Indian Health Service

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Vice-Chairman Tester:

As the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Indian Health Service Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (IHS-TSGAC), we are writing to acknowledge and extend our strong support for Robert G. McSwain in his current capacity as the new Acting Director of the Indian Health Service. Throughout many decades, Mr. McSwain has demonstrated resilient leadership and a commitment to the Department of Health and Human Services' trust responsibility to develop quality health care programs and systems to serve the more than 1.9 million American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in the United States. In 2007, Mr. McSwain previously served as the IHS Acting Director prior to being confirmed as the 8th IHS Director under President George W. Bush in 2008. Because of his historical knowledge of Indian health and the multitude of senior level positions he has held within the IHS, which has accentuated and strengthened his capabilities as a leader, we are supportive of him being considered again as the IHS Director for the duration of the Obama Administration.

The Self-Governance Communication and Education Tribal Consortium (SGCETC) and Self-Governance Tribes have enjoyed working with Mr. McSwain. As Director of the IHS, we strongly believe he will continue his leadership to positively work with Tribes to build viable health systems to serve our citizens.

Mr. McSwain is a passionate believer that the future health status of Tribal communities depends on how effectively the Indian health care system addresses chronic diseases of AI/ANs. He believes that a viable health care system increases access to care, achieves consistency in services across the system and should consist of an integrated health system to serve all of Indian Country. Throughout his leadership in the IHS, he has supported and improved coordination, outreach, communication and consultation with Tribal leadership.

If you have questions or would like to discuss this letter in further detail, please contact Chief Malerba at (860) 862-6192, lmalerba@moheganmail.com or Chairman Allen at (360) 681-4621 or email rallen@jamestowntribe.org.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Chief Lynn Malerba
The Mohegan Tribal Government
Board Member, SGCETC
Chairwoman, IHS Tribal Self-Governance
Advisory Committee



W. Ron Allen, Tribal Chairman/CEO
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Board Chairman, SGCETC
Vice-Chairman, IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee

Cc: The Honorable John McCain, ATTN: Nick Matiella
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, ATTN: Greg Bringhurst
The Honorable John Hoeven, ATTN: Ms. Shannon Brown
The Honorable James Lankford, ATTN: Derek Osborn
The Honorable Steve Daines, ATTN: Sam Sweeney
The Honorable Michael D. Crapo, ATTN: Casey Attebery
The Honorable Jerry Moran, ATTN: Nathan Heiman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, ATTN: William Hazzard
The Honorable Tom Udall, ATTN: Anthony Sedillo
The Honorable Al Franken, ATTN: Matthew Hayward
The Honorable Brian Schatz, ATTN: Lenna Aoki
The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp, ATTN: Clint Bowers
TSGAC Members and Technical Workgroup