



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Under Secretary for Health**  
**Washington DC 20420**

June 16, 2021

Chief Lynn Malerba, Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut  
Chairwoman, Indian Health Service's Tribal  
Self-Governance Advisory Committee  
314 West 14th Place  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119

Dear Chief Malerba:

Thank you for your May 17, 2021, letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding your concerns with collaboration on and implementation of the Proper and Reimbursed Care for Native Veterans Act.

On behalf of the Department, thank you and the tribal leaders of the Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC) for your continued partnership with VA to serve native Veterans in a convenient and culturally sensitive environment through the Indian Health Service (IHS)/Tribal Health Programs' Reimbursement Agreement Program.

VA recognizes the importance of collaboration, communication and cooperation with all stakeholders and believes it is key to a successful implementation. We are committed to meaningful consultation and solicitation of recommendations from tribal and Federal leaders before we take action.

As acknowledged in your letter, VA has engaged IHS in a series of fact-finding calls to learn the fundamentals of the purchased referred care (PRC) program. During those calls, IHS invited their PRC workgroup into the discussions, allowing representatives to their perspective feedback on the processes of the PRC program. Work is now underway with IHS to understand their legal interpretation of this law which amends the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. Once completed, we will conduct tribal consultation.

We appreciate TSGAC's offer to assist as we conduct tribal consultation and plan for implementation.

Should you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact [tribal.agreements@va.gov](mailto:tribal.agreements@va.gov). Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Stone".

Richard A. Stone, M.D.  
Acting