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November 19, 2013

Hon. Sam Brownback
Capital, 300 S.W. 10th Ave., Ste. 241S
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1590

Dear Governor Brownback,

On behalf of the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas I write to bring forward a topic that is having a detrimental impact on the lives of people everywhere including people in rural America and is especially dire for Native populations including resident tribes of Kansas. The issue of dental care has long been a challenge for tribes to maintain consistent, affordable and accessible care. With the advent of the Affordable Care Act the demand for dental care will likely not lessen, given the already growing shortage of practicing dentists in rural Kansas, the demand for both health and dental care could very well outpace the supply of doctors. We view the present as a time for action in order to be prepared for the needs of all people. The action needed is to expand the reach and capacity of the dental care workforce which can be accomplished with the project undertaken by the Kansas Dental Project Coalition.

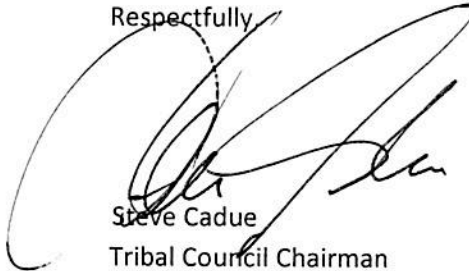
For Native children the situation is particularly severe. The prevalence of tooth decay in American Indian/Alaska Native children ages 2 to 5 is nearly three times the U.S. average with more than two-thirds of that same age group having untreated dental cavities. Too often these children live in pain which affects concentration in school, miss school altogether, and in the most extreme cases prove life-threatening due to infections. With poverty as a main factor in many of these instances, taking action would be an opportunity to ensure that future and present generations, perhaps themselves future dental professionals, if given the advantage of better health, may succeed in life.

We recently met with the Kansas Dental Project Coalition and have given our support for the creation of a new level of dental professional which would provide a much needed solution to address these disparities. The utilization of a mid-level practitioner known either as a Dental Technician or Registered Dental Practitioner would assist in addressing the demands of dentists' time allowing for more patients to be treated while allowing for greater direct dentist care for more complicated cases. These persons

would be dental hygienists that would receive advanced training and pass comprehensive clinical exams. All care would be administered under the supervision of a practicing dentist.

As federal law outside of areas that currently permit this level of practice do not allow Tribes to act independently and train or hire dental therapists for their communities and in order for Tribes to have a dental therapist in their community, state law must be changed to include dental therapists. We therefore kindly request your support for this project that would positively benefit and impact the lives of many Kansans as the need is critical. Ultimately, genuine tribal sovereignty cannot be accomplished without healthy tribal citizens.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Cadue', is written over a large, faint, circular watermark or stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steve Cadue
Tribal Council Chairman