



National Council of
Urban Indian Health
Policy & Legislation

Keep Congress Accountable through Online & Social Media Tools

Carla Lott (Amskapi Pikuni), Director of Congressional Relations
Meredith Raimondi, Sr. Manager of Communications and Events
National Council of Urban Indian Health

Carla Lott (Amskapi Pikuni), Director of Congressional Relations

Carla is Amskapi Pikuni (Blackfeet) of Montana and has over 20 years of experience working on behalf of Indian Country in grassroots advocacy, tribal law, and federal policy. Prior to joining NCUIH, Ms. Lott served as the State Tribal Liaison with Montana's senior Senator, Jon Tester and on the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.



Meredith Raimondi

Sr. Manager of Communications and Events

Meredith Raimondi is a political and communications strategist with over 10 years of experience in government, political campaigns, nonprofits, and small businesses. She served as an Obama appointee at the National Endowment for the Arts and as a staffer for Congresswoman Betty McCollum, Chair of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (MN-04) for seven years on Capitol Hill.



Located in Washington, DC, the National Council of Urban Indian Health is an organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban settings.

Training & TA

NCUIH provides UIHPs with training, technical assistance and research support to help them implement and evaluate quality, accessible and culturally appropriate healthcare services for AI/ANs living in urban areas.

Research & Information

NCUIH hosts the Knowledge Resource Center (KRC), a knowledge hub on AI/ANs living in urban areas. The KRC aims to alleviate the lack of health information on the conditions of urban AI/AN through information dissemination

Policy and Legislation

Located on Capitol Hill, NCUIH educates Congress and federal agencies about the health and wellness issues experienced by Urban AI/ANs and the Urban Indian Health Programs that serve them.

Communities of Learning

NCUIH hosts the Urban Indian Community of Learning, a peer-to-peer workforce support group comprised of professional and paraprofessional staff of UIHPs.

National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH)



Created in 1998 by Urban Indian Leaders to advance health care of American Indians/Alaska Natives.



Advocates for Indian Health Care with Congress and Federal Government.



Provides Technical support to UIHPs for implementing quality accessible health care services.



Provides Technical Assistance support to the 42 Urban Indian Health Programs across the nation.



Urban Indian Health Programs

Created in 1976 after the Relocation Era by Tribes advocating for treaty health rights off reservation. UIHPs are apart of the three-prong health system - IHS/Tribal/Urban Indian Organizations (I/T/U).

Some key legislation includes:

- Indian Health Care Improvement Act
- Affordable Care Act
- Social Security Act

NCUIH Legislative Priorities

Preserve Indian
Health Care
Improvement Act

Fully fund Indian
Health Service

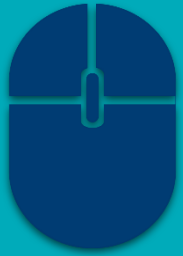
Preserve Medicaid
& 100% Federal
Medical Assistance
Percentages

Improve Services
for Native
American Veterans

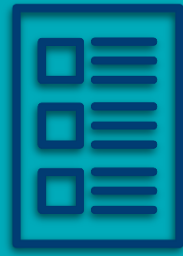
Extend Federal
Tort Claims Act to
Urban Indian
Health Programs

Behavioral Health
Funding

Overview of Workshop



How to use the
NCUIH
Legislative
Tracker



How to learn
about a piece of
legislation



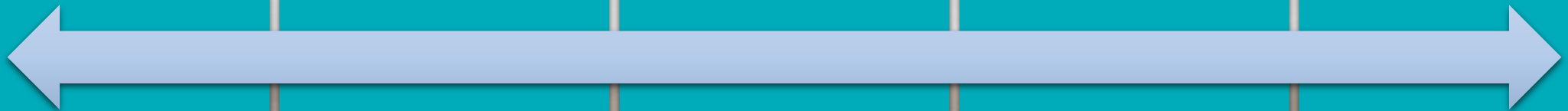
How to contact
Members of
Congress about
a specific piece
of legislation



How to use
social media
tools to amplify
your message



Practice using
these tools



The Legislative Tracker is a list of federal bills.

<https://ncuih.org/legislativetracker>

Impacting Native
Americans
and/or Indian
Health Care

Impacting Urban
Indian
Organizations

Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act

- S. 229
- H.R. 1128

S.229:

S. 229: Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act

Introduced: Jan 25, 2019 (116th Congress, 2019–2021)

Sponsor: [Sen. Tom Udall \[D-NM\]](#)

Status: Introduced

Text: [Read Bill Text »](#) (4 pages)

H.R. 1128: Indian Programs Advanced Appropriations Act

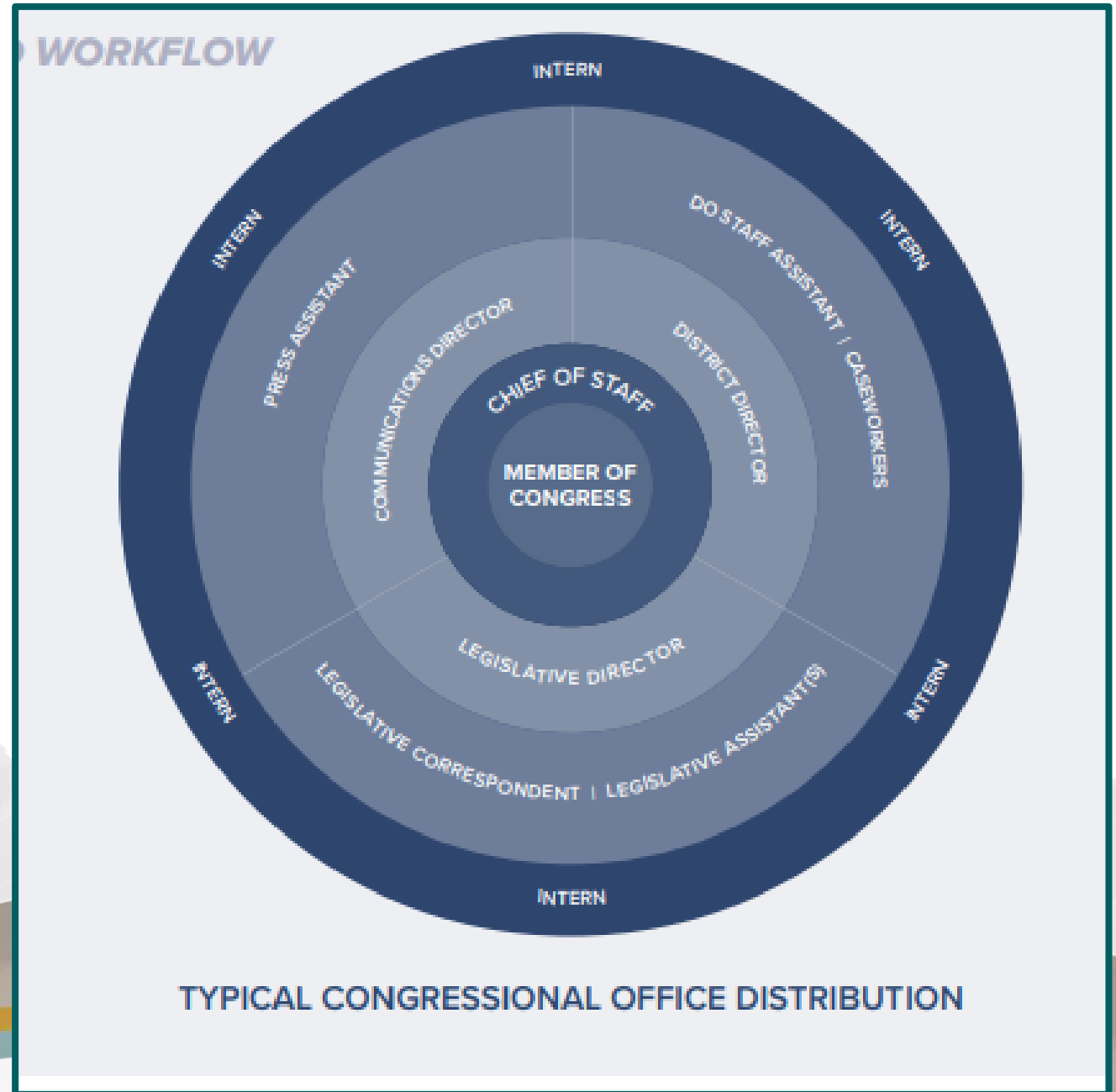
- To provide advance appropriations authority for certain accounts of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education of the Department of the Interior and the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

What does this mean?

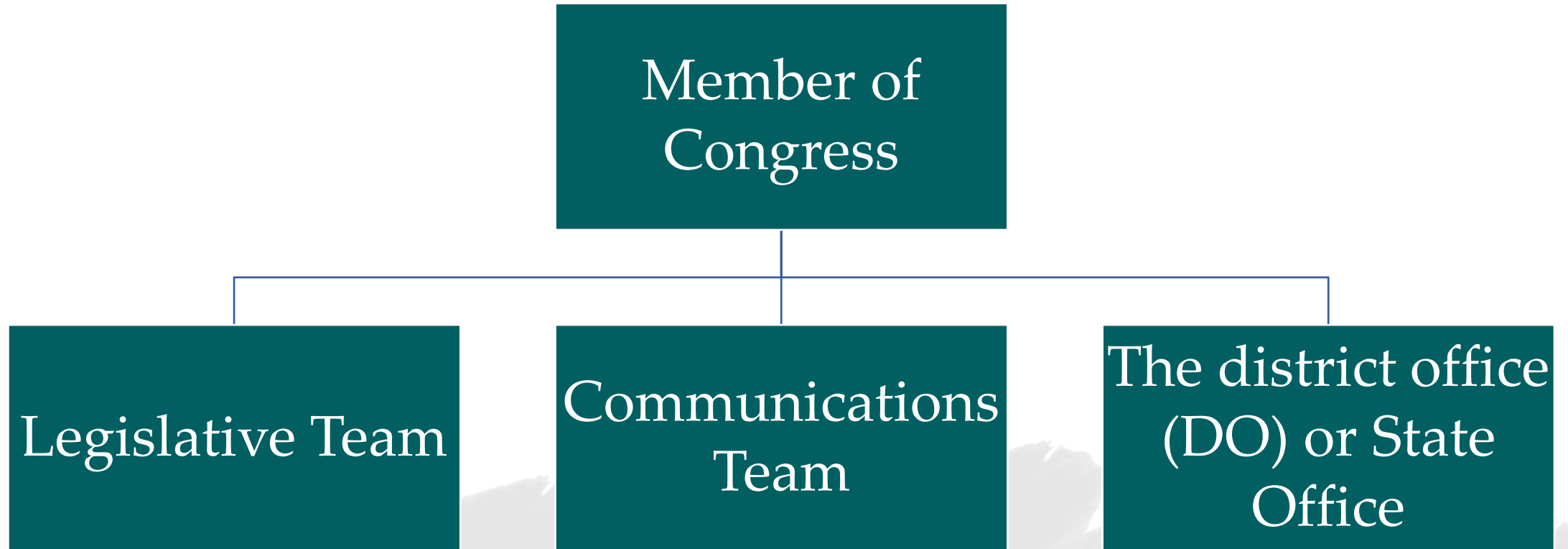
How to use the Legislative Tracker

The image shows a browser window displaying the homepage of the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH). The browser's address bar shows the URL `ncuih.org/index`. The website's navigation bar includes a 'MENU' button, a search box labeled 'Site Search...', and links for 'CALENDAR', 'BOARD CENTER', and 'DIRECTORY OF URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS AND NCUIH MEMBERS'. The main content area features the NCUIH logo, the organization's name, a 'Donate' button, and a background image of the U.S. Capitol building. A large watermark 'techsmith' is overlaid on the page. Below the main banner, there are two promotional sections: one for the 'Native Youth Indigi-Wellness Champion Campaign' (September 10 - 20, 2019) and another for 'HEALTH CARE POLICY, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RESEARCH'. The footer contains the text 'The National Council of Urban Indian'.

Congressional Office Structure



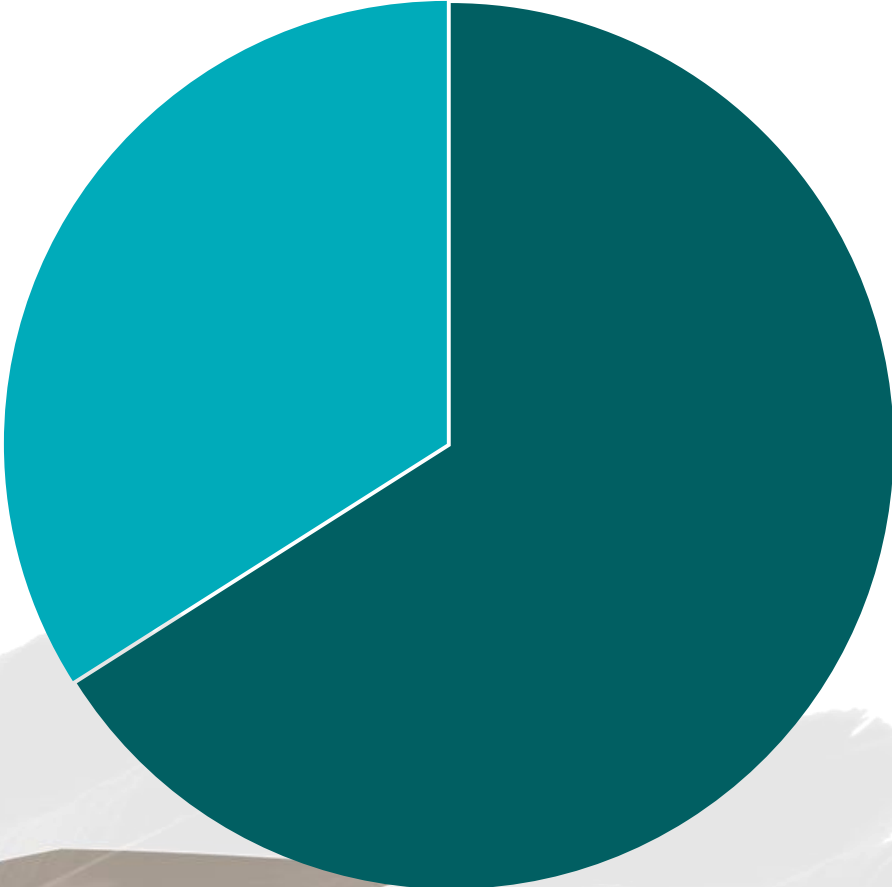
Congressional Office Structure



Types of Mail Received by Congressional Offices

Congressional Correspondence

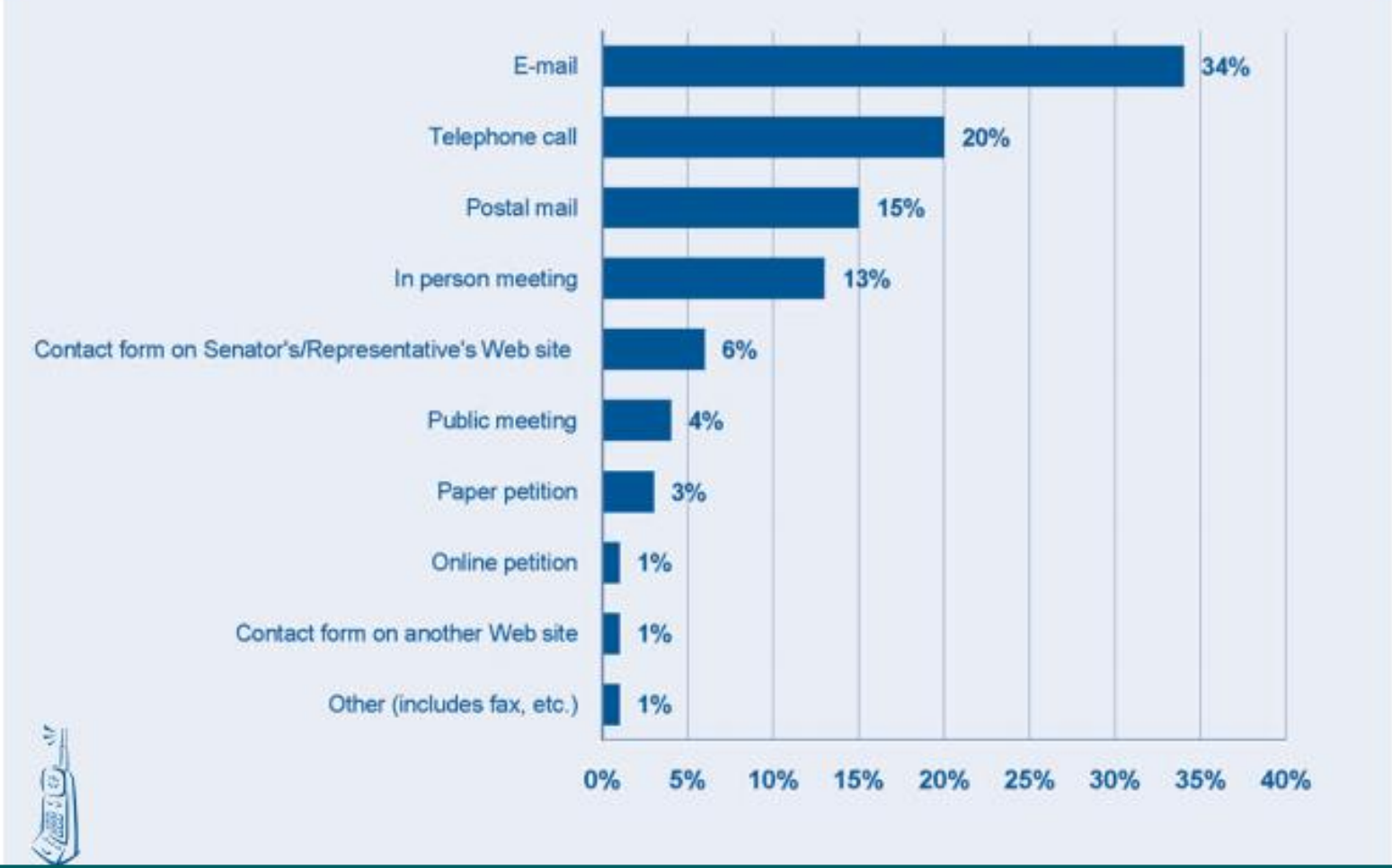
- Campaign Mail
- Individual Mail



Preferred Methods for Contacting Congress

Additionally, adult Americans indicated they would prefer online methods for contacting a Senator or Representative, with 42% indicating they would choose an online method, with the plurality (34%) choosing e-mail.

Figure 5. American Adults Would Choose E-mail to Contact a U.S. Senator or Representative



Write to Congress

Overview Summary **Details** Text

Cosponsors

35 cosponsors (26D, 9R) ([show](#))

- [Cole, Tom \[R-OK4\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Grijalva, Raúl \[D-AZ3\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Haaland, Debra \[D-NM1\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Luján, Ben \[D-NM3\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Mullin, Markwayne \[R-OK2\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Ruiz, Raul \[D-CA36\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Titus, Dina \[D-NV1\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Watson Coleman, Bonnie \[D-NJ12\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Young, Don \[R-AK0\]](#) (joined Feb 8, 2019)
- [Stefanik, Elise \[R-NY21\]](#) (joined Mar 6, 2019)
- [Armstrong, Kelly \[R-ND0\]](#) (joined Apr 10, 2019)
- [Davids, Sharice \[D-KS3\]](#) (joined Apr 10, 2019)
- [Garamendi, John \[D-CA3\]](#) (joined May 10, 2019)
- [Kilmer, Derek \[D-WA6\]](#) (joined May 10, 2019)
- [Craig, Angie \[D-MN2\]](#) (joined May 22, 2019)
- [Herrera Beutler, Jaime \[R-WA3\]](#) (joined May 22, 2019)
- [Horn, Kendra \[D-OK5\]](#) (joined Jun 11, 2019)
- [Kennedy, Joseph \[D-MA4\]](#) (joined Jun 11, 2019)
- [Kind, Ron \[D-WI3\]](#) (joined Jun 11, 2019)
- [Moolenaar, John \[R-MI4\]](#) (joined Jun 11, 2019)
- [Dingell, Debbie \[D-MI12\]](#) (joined Jun 25, 2019)
- [Heck, Denny \[D-WA10\]](#) (joined Jun 25, 2019)
- [Simpson, Michael "Mike" \[R-ID2\]](#) (joined Jun 25, 2019)
- [Stevens, Haley \[D-MI11\]](#) (joined Jun 25, 2019)
- [Cárdenas, Tony \[D-CA29\]](#) (joined Jun 27, 2019)
- [Axne, Cynthia \[D-IA3\]](#) (joined Jul 9, 2019)
- [Gallego, Ruben \[D-AZ7\]](#) (joined Jul 9, 2019)
- [Horsford, Steven \[D-NV4\]](#) (joined Jul 9, 2019)
- [Soto, Darren \[D-FL9\]](#) (joined Jul 10, 2019)
- [Wasserman Schultz, Debbie \[D-FL23\]](#) (joined Jul 10, 2019)
- [Crist, Charlie \[D-FL13\]](#) (joined Jul 12, 2019)

Re



Save



T/

Wid

Get

Fol

up

f

On

Spe

stal

Who

the

Aut

\$40

Am

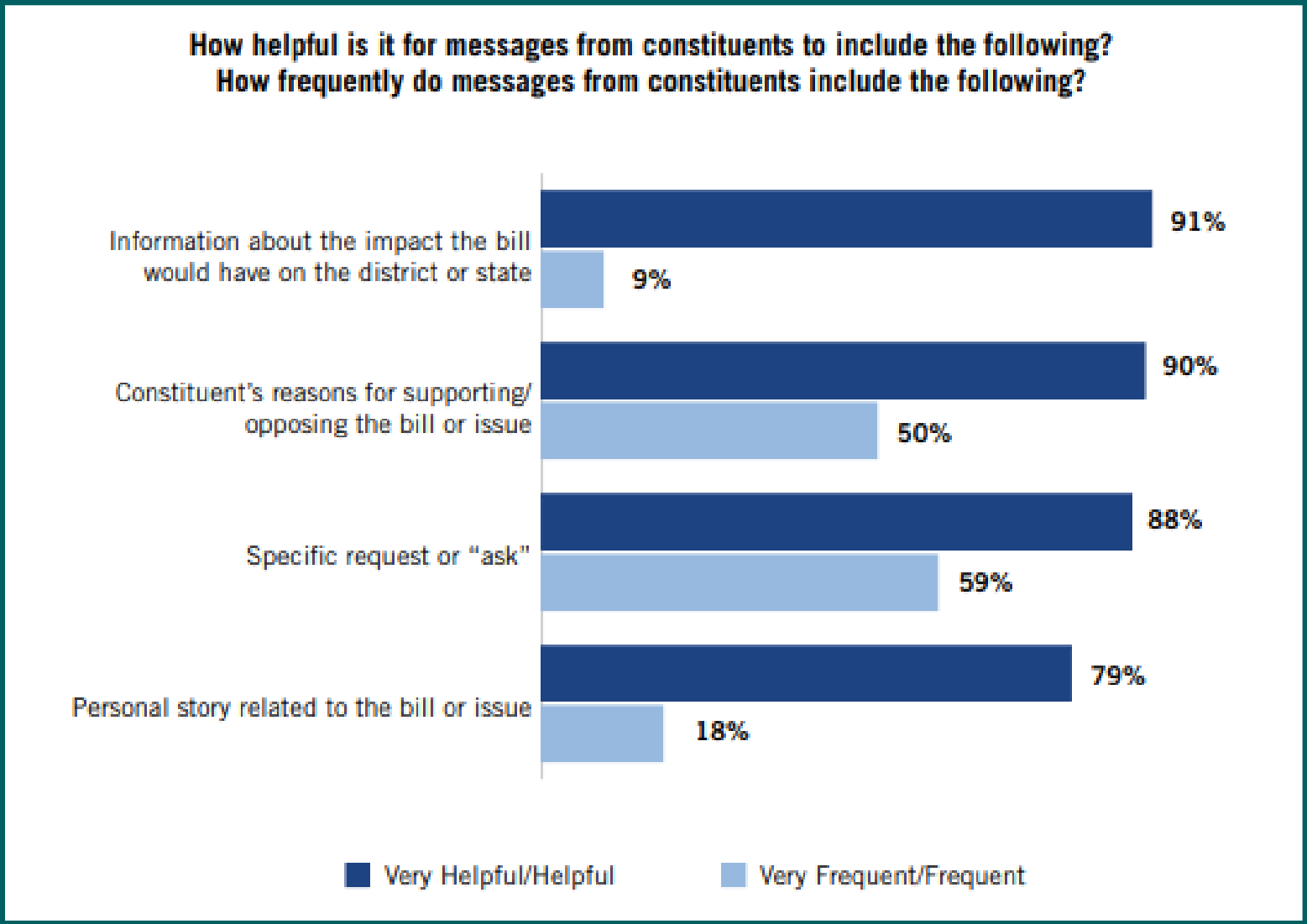
sex

for

Nat

nati

What should you say in your message?



Source: Congressional Management Foundation 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.

Answer 4 key questions for legislators:

What actions do you want Congress to take?

Why do you want Congress to do that?

What are the current and/or potential local impacts?

What are your personal stories or connections to the policy?

What happens to your message?

Legislative Correspondent

- Reads Letter
- Batches Letter

Legislative Aides, Legislative Assistants and Legislative Directors

- Meet with LC to discuss issues presented by constituents.
- The more original your message is the more likely to have it brought up at such a meeting.

Legislative Correspondent

- Drafts response to constituent.
- 

Using Social Media to Contact Congress

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Other
examples

More than three-quarters (76%) of the staffers "agree" with the statement "social media enabled us to have more meaningful interactions with constituents."

(70%) agreed that "social media have made Members/Senators more accountable to constituents."

Twitter



TWEET
CONGRESS

TWEETS FROM LEGISLATORS

2,304,149

TOP TWEETERS

CALIFORNIA

California

55

Tweeters >



John Garamendi
[@RepGaramendi](#)

TWEETS	FOLLOWERS
18,697	28,675



Eric Swalwell
[@RepSwalwell](#)

TWEETS	FOLLOWERS
11,640	566,895

“For those not regularly tuned in to what's going on in Washington, social media gives us the ability to share and engage with those people.”

—House Communications
Director

Contact Congress on Twitter

[Congress](#) / [Bills](#) / [H.R. 1128 / 116th](#) / [Details](#)

H.R. 1128: Indian Programs Advanced Appropriations Act

[Overview](#) [Summary](#) [Details](#) [Text](#) [Study Guide](#)

Cosponsors

35 cosponsors (28D, 9R) [\(show\)](#)

Committee Assignments

[House Energy and Commerce](#)
[House Natural Resources](#)
↳ [For Indigenous Peoples of the United States](#)
[House Budget](#)


Committee chairs determine whether a bill will move past the committee stage.

Votes

There have been no roll call votes related to this bill.

Related Bills

Legislative action may be occurring on one of these bills in lieu of or in parallel to action on this bill.

	S. 729 (identical) Introduced Last Action: Jan 25, 2019
--	---

Search for [similar bills](#).

Subject Areas

[Native Americans](#)
[Appropriations](#)

React with an emoji
Save your opinion
Add Note All Positions

SeatGeek
REDSKINS TICKETS
vs Cowboys
vs Bears
Mon Sep 25 @ 8:15PM
[\(About Ads | Hide These Ads\)](#)

Widget for your website
[Get a bill status widget](#)

Follow GovTrack on social media for more updates:
f t M m

On GovTrack Insider:
[Social Security Fairness Act would end two 1977 and 1983 rules that restrict payments for millions...](#)
Should these 1977 and 1983 rules be eliminated, or do they help save taxpayers money and prevent "double dipping" into the system? Sep 12, 2019

Thank Your Members of Congress

5%

People who contacted to thank Congress



NCUIH @NCUIH_Official · Aug 7

Thank you @RepDonBacon for cosponsoring the Health Care Access for Urban Veterans Act (H.R. 4153)! We appreciate your commitment to ensuring access to health care for American Indian and Alaska Native veterans who served the United States!

HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR URBAN NATIVE VETERANS ACT



National Council of Urban Indian Health

1 1 6

Let your friends on Facebook know!

[Congress](#) / [Bills](#) / S. 229 (116th)

S. 229: Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act

 Track S. 229

 Call or Write Congress

 Tweet

 Share 0

Overview

[Summary](#)

[Details](#)

[Text](#)

[Study Guide](#)

A bill to provide advance appropriations authority for certain accounts of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education of the Department of the Interior and the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

The bill's titles are written by its sponsor.

The federal budget process occurs in two stages: appropriations and authorizations. This is an appropriations bill, which sets overall spending limits by agency or program, typically for a single fiscal year (October 1 through September 30 of the next year).

Sponsor and status



[Tom Udall](#)

Sponsor. Senior Senator for New Mexico. Democrat.



[Read Text »](#)

Last Updated: Jan 25, 2019

Length: 4 pages

Introduced Jan 25, 2019

Status **Introduced on Jan 25, 2019**

This bill is in the first stage of the legislative process. It was introduced into Congress on January 25, 2019. It will typically be considered by committee next before it is possibly sent on to the House or Senate as a whole.

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from a user named Meredith Raimondi. The post text reads: "I just wrote to my Congressman and Senators to support the Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act which would provide critical funding to resources needed for our communities. Please visit this link to contact your Member of Congress to support this as well!". Below the text is a GovTrack.US link for "Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act (S. 229)". The Facebook interface shows the "Share on Facebook" dialog box with the "News Feed" option selected and the audience set to "Friends except...".

[\(About Ads | Hide These Ads\)](#)

Widget for your website

[Get a bill status widget »](#)

Follow GovTrack on social media for more

What happens to your posts or comments?

Communications Team

- Read messages received on social channels and compile them for the Policy Team.

Policy Team

- Communications team presents Policy Team with important messages at weekly meetings.

One Tweet Can Make a Difference

The food bank went from being “on” the table in Washington, to “at” the table with one tweet.

Citizen Impact Story: One Tweet Gets a Legislator’s Attention

(Note about this case study: CMF has chosen to withhold the names of the citizen-advocate and the legislator involved, as revealing them would possibly interfere with the relationship between them.)

Congressional decisions affect food banks around the U.S. through tax laws, incentives to give to charities, and federal programs. Among those programs that help feed needy citizens is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly known as Food Stamps). SNAP directly affects operators of food banks: if SNAP budget is cut, food banks are forced to rely more on private charities, including food banks.

A Representative was considering a vote on the SNAP program, putting a food bank manager for a food bank in the advocacy area. The manager knew her Member of the House, but had rarely “pressured” him on a budget vote, the food bank employee put out a simple message on Twitter to contact our Representative and let him know this budget vote affected the food bank.

A few hours later the food bank’s phone rang. A staff member from the Member’s office, whom the employee knew, was not too pleased by this “pressure.” The senior manager explained the situation, and had subsequent conversations with other staff members. Some months later another budget vote was approaching in the House. *This time* the congressional office reached out to the senior manager before the vote. The senior manager was seen as a valued expert on hunger issues. In this case, the food bank went from being “on” the table in Washington, to “at” the table ... with one tweet.

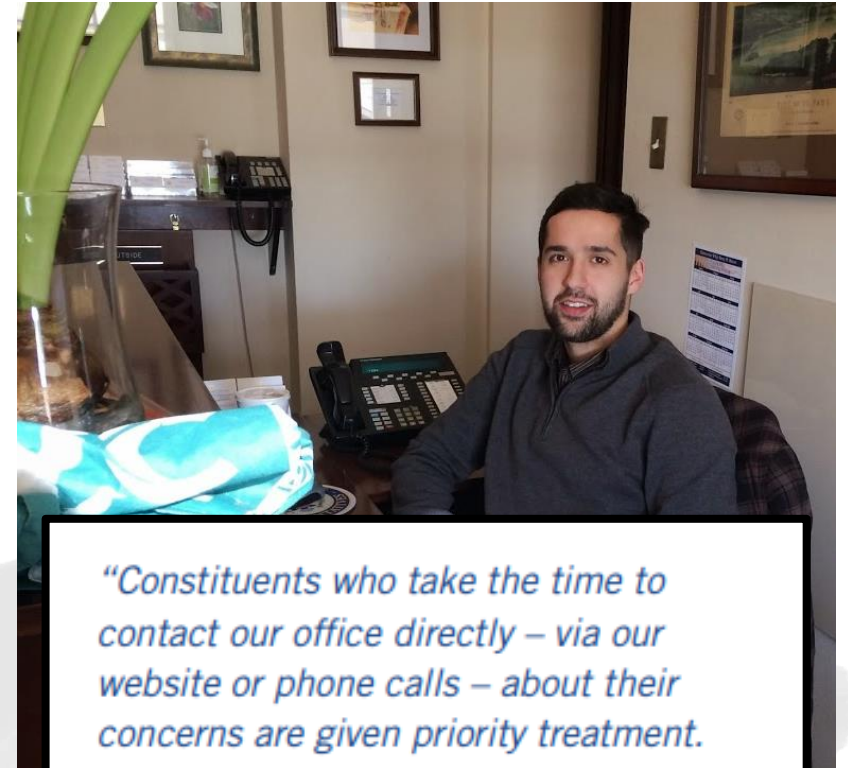
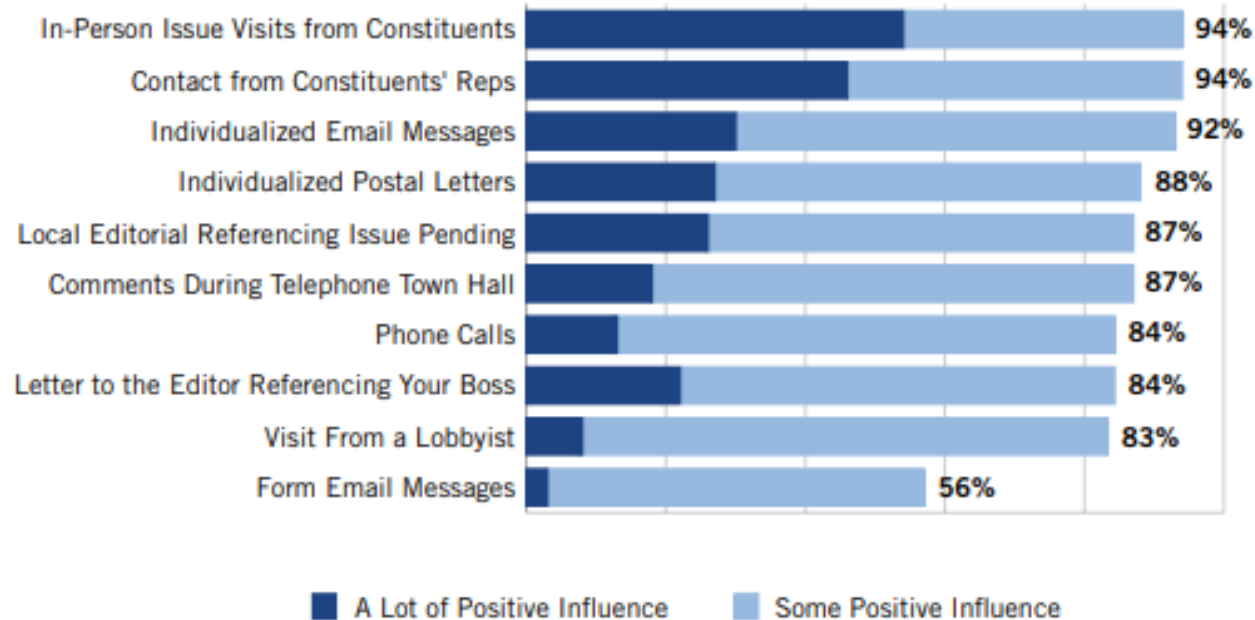


CongressFoundation.org

Old School Methods

Should you call Congress?

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the Washington office have on his/her decision?



"Constituents who take the time to contact our office directly – via our website or phone calls – about their concerns are given priority treatment. Their comments are recorded, and the data is shared with the entire staff for immediate action."

—House Legislative Director

Activating Your Community

Make a toolkit.

- How to contact Congress
- Example social media posts
- Example newsletter blurbs
- Example press releases



Example Toolkit



National Council
of Urban Indian Health

CALL TO ACTION TOOLKIT: HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR URBAN NATIVE VETERANS ACT

CALL TO ACTION: ASK CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE THE VA TO REIMBURSE UIOS FOR HEALTH CARE

Representative Ro Khanna and Senator Tom Udall, vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, introduced the *Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act*, a bill to improve health care access for Native American Veterans by providing Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) coverage for care that Native American Veterans receive at urban Indian health centers. This legislation would include “urban Indian organizations” in the statute requiring the VA to reimburse Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal health facilities for services they provide to native veterans. To ensure that the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act receives as much support as possible, we encourage you to contact your Member of Congress and request that they sign on as a cosponsor of this bill (if they have not already).

- View NCUH one-pager on [VA-IHS Memorandum of Understanding](#).
- [NCUIH Press Release](#)
- [Udall, Khanna Press Release](#)
- [AP Story: Bill would expand health care options for Native veterans](#)
- [House bill](#) (H.R. 4153)
- [Senate bill](#) (S. 2365)

HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR URBAN NATIVE VETERANS ACT



National Council of
Urban Indian Health

Example Letters



Write to Your House Member

Please use the following text below as a template to call or email to your Representatives. You should call and email your representative; you can find your representative [here](#).

Dear Representative [],

As your constituent, I respectfully request you sign on as a cosponsor to the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act recently introduced by Representative Ro Khanna and Senator Udall. This bill is a critical language fix that would include "urban Indian organizations"

Write to Your Senator

Please use the following text below as a template to call or email to your Senators. You can find your Senators [here](#).

Dear Senator [],

As your constituent, I respectfully request you sign on as a cosponsor to the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act (S.2365) recently introduced by Senator Udall and Representative Ro Khanna. This bill is a critical language fix that would include "urban Indian organizations" in the statute requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reimburse Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal health facilities for services they provide to native veterans.

Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) are an integral part of the American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) health care delivery system. However, due to an oversight in legislation UIOs are the only part of the IHS Indian/Tribal/Urban (I/T/U) system that do not receive reimbursement under the VA-IHS MOU reimbursement agreement. However, UIOs were created by Congress as a response to Tribes that wanted to ensure their members would receive quality health care off of reservations as part of the trust obligation.

The Department of Veterans Administration has stated that it cannot address the issue on its own, and that only Congress has the authority to correct this oversight. The Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act of 2019 would ensure that all three branches of the I/T/U system receive reimbursement for health care services delivered to AI/AN veterans.

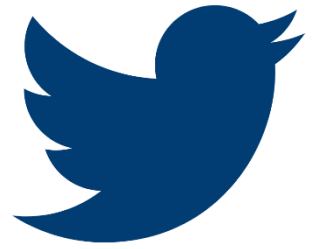
We hope you will become a cosponsor of the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act and show your support for the health of urban AI/AN Veterans.

For the sake of the health of American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans and the fulfillment of the U.S. trust obligation, we request your support of this simple language fix. To sign on, please contact Ms. Kim Moxley (Kim_Moxley@indian.senate.gov) 202-224-2251 from Senator Udall's office.

Sincerely, [Your Name and Address]

ilities for
system.
ceive
o Tribes that
as the authority
of the I/T/U
of the Health Care
request your
2631 from

Example Social Media



Twitter

- From your Twitter account, tweet to your Senators and Members of Congress.
- Find your Senators' handles [here](#).
 - Example tweet: "Dear [@ Senator's handle], please sign on to Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act to support Native Veterans! #urbanIndianhealth @ncuih_official"
- Find your Members of Congress [here](#).
 - Example tweet: "Dear [@ Member's handle], please sign on to Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act to support Native Veterans! #urbanIndianhealth @ncuih_official"

Example Social Media



Facebook

- Example post:
 - Call your Member of Congress to sign on to the Urban Native Veterans Act supporting Native veterans! Find out more here [\(link\)](#).

Newsletters



[View this email in your browser.](#)

Call to Action: Ask Congress to Support Urban Indian Veterans

Show your support for Native veterans by asking Congress to support this important legislation today!

A Member Benefit Email from NCUIH | [View this email in your browser](#)



National Council of Urban Indian Health

EXCELLENCE. EQUITY. EFFECTIVENESS



POLICY UPDATE

Call to Action: Ask Congress to Authorize the VA to Reimburse UIOs for Health Care

HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR URBAN NATIVE VETERANS ACT

Write to Your House Member

Please use the following text below as a template to call or email to your Representatives. You should call and email your representative; you can find your representative [here](#).

Dear Representative [],

On behalf of [program] and the communities we serve, we respectfully request you sign on as a cosponsor to the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act recently introduced by Representative Ro Khanna and Senator Udall. This bill is a critical language fix that would include "urban Indian organizations" in the statute requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reimburse Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal health facilities for services they provide to native veterans.

Stay in Touch

Find out the Staffer who works on your issue...

- Call your Member of Congress and Senators and ask who handles the policy issue.

Hi – my name is Meredith Raimondi and I am with the National Council of Urban Indian Health. Can I please speak with the person who handles Native American issues?

If unavailable, ask:

- Can you tell me the name and email address of the person who handles this issue for the Congressman?



The Bottom Line

The more effort a constituent puts in,
the more engagement and impact
they can expect from the
Member of Congress.

One Last Resource: Regulatory Tracker

- https://www.ncuih.org/regulations_tracker



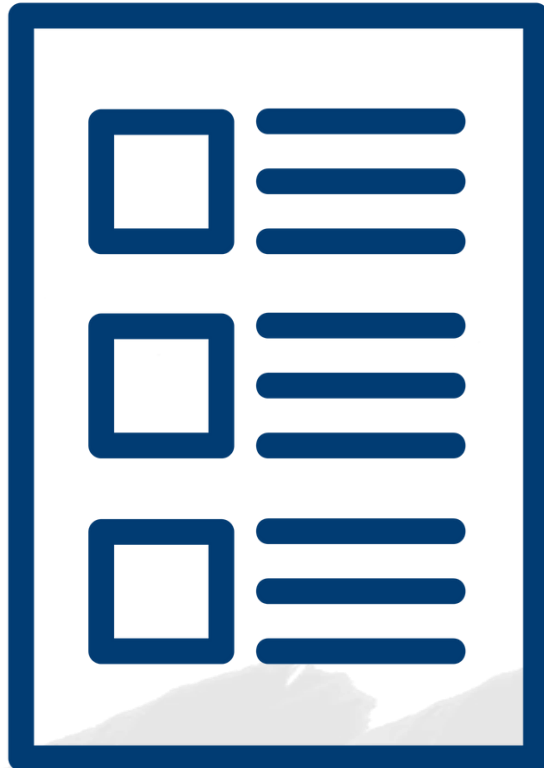
Regulation Tracker

The purpose of this regulation tracker is to identify and summarize key regulations issued by various federal agencies that are relevant to American Indian and Alaska Natives and Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHPs) You may view the regulation by selecting an agency below.

This tracker will be updated on a bi-weekly basis.

Select an Agency Below to View Relevant Regulation

Handout



National Council of
Urban Indian Health

USING ONLINE TOOLS TO CONTACT CONGRESS

1

Research legislation.

<https://www.ncuih.org/legislativetracker>



2

Find out who your Senators and Member of Congress are on GovTrack.

<https://www.govtrack.us>



3

Determine if your Senators and Member of Congress support the legislation. If not, send them an email.



4

Follow up with a post on Twitter or Facebook.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF URBAN INDIAN HEALTH
924 PENNSYLVANIA AVE SE
WASHINGTON, DC 20003
NCUIH.ORG





National Council of
Urban Indian Health
Policy & Legislation

Thank you!

Carla Lott

Director of Congressional Relations

National Council of Urban Indian Health

p: 202-544-0344

a: 924 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Washington, DC 20003

w: ncuih.org e: cmlott@ncuih.org



**National Council
of Urban Indian Health**



Meredith Raimondi

Senior Manager, Communications and Events

National Council of Urban Indian Health

p: 202-544-0344 m: 202-417-7781

a: 924 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Washington, DC 20003

w: ncuih.org e: mraimondi@ncuih.org



**National Council
of Urban Indian Health**



@metameredith