



Support the Health Needs of Native Children

The AAP is dedicated to ensuring Native children have access to the health services and public health programs they need to thrive.

Native Children Face Unique Disparities

- The legacy of historical trauma continues to manifest in the lives of Native children today and creates substantial health disparities.
- Native children face higher risks for suicide, a variety of chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes, and an infant mortality rate that is over 25 percent higher, compared to all U.S. races.
- These disparities are the result of social determinants of health, not lifestyle choices. Improved access to quality care can support thriving children.

Advance Appropriations for IHS

- In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, Congress began providing advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS), which ensures IHS is funded through FY 2024.
- This adds no cost to the current fiscal year since funds are not available until the fiscal year for which they are indicated begins.
- Advance appropriations give IHS flexibility, certainty, and time to better plan how to spend its resources.
- This means more access to quality physical and mental health services for children.

Recruitment and Workforce Retention

- The IHS loan repayment program has helped the agency ensure an adequate health workforce to serve in remote locations, but unlike comparable programs, is taxed.
- The IHS currently has a **29 percent vacancy rate** for health care professionals, including physicians.
- IHS spends over \$7 million annually paying taxes on loan repayment benefits when it could be funding **200 additional loan repayment awards** instead.
- Amending the tax code to make IHS student loan repayment for health professionals tax exempt will help close these gaps and strengthen the IHS workforce.

Support the Health Needs of Native Children

Continue providing strong funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service;

Support bills that improve recruitment and workforce retention for the Indian Health Service, including tax fairness for IHS loan repayment and scholarships; and

Make discussions on the health needs of Native children a priority in Congress.