Federal COVID-19 Legislation & Advocacy

Kevin J. Allis
Chief Executive Officer
The National Congress of the American Indians
H.R. 6074 - Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act

- H.R. 6074 signed into law on March 6, 2020.
- $8.3 billion package to respond to COVID-19.
- $950 million in funding administered through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for pandemic preparedness and response.
- Sets aside not less than $40 million for Indian Country, and CDC allocated $80 million to Indian Country.
- Permits reimbursement to the Indian Health Service, tribal nations, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations for COVID-19 costs incurred before passage of H.R. 6074.
H.R. 6201 - Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

• FFCRA signed into law on March 18, 2020.
• Provides $64 million for the Indian Health Services account.
• Provides coverage of testing for COVID-19 at no cost-sharing for American Indians and Alaska Natives, regardless of where those services have been authorized.
• Includes a $10 million tribal set-aside for Older Americans Act grants, which provide for nutrition and direct support services to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian elders.
3rd COVID-19 Stimulus Package and NCAI’s Role as a Clearinghouse

• There is nothing more important to Indian Country right now than addressing this unprecedented health crisis.
• The COVID-19 pandemic affects all aspects of tribal governance and life in tribal communities.
• To ensure Congress provides broad relief for tribal nations to respond to and recover from COVID-19, it is essential that Indian Country has a comprehensive, unified advocacy effort.
• To facilitate having a unified tribal voice, NCAI took on the role of a clearinghouse for tribal priorities from across Indian Country.
Advocacy Working Groups

- NCAI formed working groups to compile and refine a comprehensive list of priorities based on input from tribal nations.
- In partnership with tribal leaders, tribal organizations, and tribal advocates, the working groups produced materials that were sent to Congress to advocate for the inclusion of tribal priorities in the 3rd COVID-19 stimulus package.
- The working groups also organized advocacy efforts to ensure key offices knew the importance of including tribal priorities in the bill.
H.R. 748 - Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

• Due to Indian Country’s unified advocacy, the CARES Act includes many strong provisions for tribal nations.
  – Ex: $453 million for Bureau of Indian Affairs programs.
  – Ex: $8 billion tribal set-aside from the Coronavirus Relief Fund.
  – Ex: $1.032 billion for the Indian Health Service.
  – Ex: $300 million in supplemental housing and community development funding.
  – Ex: $100 million in supplemental funding for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.
Working Group Points of Contact

• NCAI continues convening the working groups to address pending legislation and ensure the proper implementation of enacted legislation.
  – Economic Development & Employment:
    Fatima Abbas, fabbas@ncai.org (please cc Brittany Habbart, bhabbart@ncai.org)
  – Healthcare & Human Services (includes Nutrition):
    • Nicholas Courtney, ncourtney@ncai.org
  – Tribal Governance (Housing and BIA Appropriations):
    • Tyler Scribner, tscribner@ncai.org
CONTACT INFORMATION

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