

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



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June 21, 2010

The Honorable Marilyn Scott
Chairwoman
American Indian Health Commission
1033 Old Blyn Highway
Sequim, WA 98382

The Honorable Brian Cladoosby
Chairman
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
11404 Moorage Way
La Conner, WA 98257

Dear Chairwoman Scott and Chairman Cladoosby:

Thank you for your letter and subsequent discussion at the Centennial Accord meeting regarding the role the Tribes will need to play in Washington's implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. I share your concerns about the health disparities among American Indians (AI) and Alaska Natives (AN) in our state. It is essential that we take advantage of the opportunity that this historic legislation presents to address these concerns, and I intend that the state and the Tribes be partners in this effort.

As you know, there is no money in our current state budget to directly support AI/AN participation in reform implementation. However, should you identify available funding from other sources, including the federal government, we will do what we can to help secure it. I am also encouraged to hear that the Tribes are looking to each other to jointly provide some of the funding necessary to be proactively engaged in this reform effort.

I agree that a discussion between American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) Tribal representatives and my Health Care Cabinet is appropriate. The Cabinet is scheduled to meet the afternoon of July 7 in Olympia, and I invite Tribal representatives to join them at 3:30 to discuss the state's implementation of health care reform, and how the Tribes can best participate. I have asked my staff to follow-up with yours at AIHC with additional details.

Thank you again for writing. I look forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor



cc: Doug Porter, Health Care Authority
Susan Dreyfus, Department of Social & Health Services
Steve Hill, Department of Retirement Services
Kari Burrell, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Jonathan Seib, Governor's Executive Policy Office