



NCAI BROADCAST

NEWS & UPDATES FOR INDIAN COUNTRY

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National
Congress of
American
Indians

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Third COVID-19 Relief Bill Becomes Law

Bill Features Historic \$10 Billion in Direct Funding for Tribal Nations

WASHINGTON, DC | Today, Congress passed, and the President signed into law H.R. 748, a national stimulus package designed to address the far-reaching impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Over the past several weeks, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), tribal nations, partner organizations, and tribal advocates worked tirelessly to develop Indian Country's top policy priorities for addressing COVID-19 and push Congress to include these priorities in its stimulus package. The final legislation features strong provisions in support of these priorities and will help tribal communities across Indian Country as they respond to the pandemic.

“This legislation is not only a monumental achievement for Indian Country, it is a landmark affirmation of tribal governmental parity and the federal government’s trust and treaty obligations to tribal nations,” said NCAI CEO Kevin J. Allis. “Indian Country achieved this victory through the around-the-clock efforts of tribal leaders and advocates across the nation working as one to ensure that the needs of tribal governments and communities are addressed in the weeks and months to come. Unity is our greatest asset.”

Below is a summary of the key tribal provisions.

H.R. 748, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act: Tribal Provisions Summary

Economic Development and Employment

- Provides \$454 billion for loans, loan guarantees, and investments in support of the Federal Reserve's lending facilities to eligible businesses, states, tribal nations, and municipalities
- Provides an \$8 billion set-aside for tribal nations from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to use for expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Makes Tribal Business Concerns eligible for the Small Business Act Section 7(a) program, which will provide 100 percent federal loan guarantees up to \$10 million to cover costs like employee salaries, paid sick leave/medical leave, mortgages/rents, and employee health insurance premiums
- Authorizes the federal government to provide a 50 percent reimbursement for the cost of unemployment compensation to tribal nations that are reimbursement-option employers
- Makes tribal fishery participants eligible for assistance from the Department of Commerce, including direct relief payments

Tribal Governance and Housing / Community Development

- \$453 million for Indian Affairs Operation of Indian Programs until September 30, 2021
- \$300 million authorized through September 30, 2024 for Department of Housing and Urban Development Native American Programs
- \$200 million for the Indian Housing Block Grants (IHBG) formula
- \$100 million for Indian Community Development Block Grants (ICDBG)

Health, Education, and Nutrition

Health

- \$1.032 billion for Indian Health Services
- Up to \$65 million is for electronic health record stabilization and support
- Not less than \$450 million will be distributed through IHS directly operated programs and to tribal nations and tribal organizations under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, and through contracts with or grants to urban Indian organizations under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act
- \$125 million may be transferred to and merged with the "Indian Health Service, Indian Health Facilities" account
- Not less than \$15 million from the Health Resources and Services Administration for telehealth and rural health activities
- Not less than \$15 million for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Health Surveillance Program
- Not less than \$15 million from the Public Health Service and Social Services Emergency Fund for essential medical resources
- Not less than \$125 million set aside from the Centers for Disease Control - Wide Activities and Program Support account
- Extension of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians through November 30, 2020
- \$4.5 million for tribal domestic violence shelters through the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (10 percent tribal set-aside from \$45 million overall)

- Extension of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program through November 30, 2020
- \$20 million for the Older Americans Act, Tribal Nutrition Program, which provides funds for the delivery of nutrition services to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian elders
- \$900 million for Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) which includes Tribal LIHEAP

Education

- \$69 million for Operation of Indian Education Programs until September 30, 2021
- Not less than \$20 million shall be for Tribal Colleges and Universities
 - \$78,000 for the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development
 - Education Stabilization Fund:
- \$153.75 million set aside for programs operated or funded by the Bureau of Indian Education
- \$1.046 billion for Minority Serving Institutions, which include but are not limited to, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions, and Native American Serving Non-tribal Institutions
 - Access to Institute of Museum and Library Services grants
- \$50 million to states, territories, and tribal nations to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services
- Any matching funds requirements for tribal nations are waived for grants
- Bureau of Indian Education and tribally-controlled schools are eligible for Department of Education waivers for statutory and regulatory requirements related to assessments, accountability, and reporting requirements, in addition to grant requirements such as restrictions on carryover funding and certain requirements under the Student Supports and Academic Enrichment Grants program, including the needs assessment, certain spending restrictions, and the limitation on technology spending

Nutrition

- \$100 million for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- \$50 million for facility improvements and equipment upgrades
- \$50 million for costs relating to additional food purchases

Homeland Security

- REAL ID Act deadline has been extended to September 30, 2021

NCAI extends its deepest gratitude to the members of Congress who fought for the inclusion of Indian Country's priorities in the final legislation. The passage of this bill represents the first of several necessary steps that the federal government must take to ensure tribal nations, communities, organizations, and citizens have the resources they need to combat and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. NCAI will continue to fight for Indian Country in Washington, DC, and we will keep you apprised of further legislative developments related to COVID-19 in the weeks and months to come.

For a comprehensive look at Indian Country's priorities, resources, and information regarding COVID-19, please click [here](#).

If you have questions about the legislation's specific provisions or Indian Country's policy priorities, please contact the appropriate policy area lead below:

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