DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

www.nih.gov

September 30, 2026

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), part of the National Institutes of Health under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to initiate a Tribal Consultation on the renewal of the **Resource Center for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC)** initiative. The in-person Tribal Consultation will be held Tuesday, October 20th at the **National Congress of American Indians 83rd Annual Convention**, with a virtual participation option. Your participation and input are essential in shaping the RC-TEC initiative to support the capacity of the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs).

The RC-TEC initiative was established to provide technical assistance and support the research and data science capacity of the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs). The TECs play a central role in addressing health disparities by serving AI/AN populations through the collection and analysis of health surveillance data, the maintenance of patient registries, the evaluation of public health interventions, and the mobilization of emergency response to public health crises. The TECs are ideally positioned to contribute to the evidence base and scientific literature on AI/AN health yet vary in the scientific staff available to conduct research. The RC-TEC initiative is intended to help close these gaps.

This Tribal consultation concerns NIMHD's proposed renewal of the RC-TEC funding opportunity through a new competition. NIMHD is committed to the relationship between NIH and Tribal Nations and to the principle that decisions affecting American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities should be informed by AI/AN voices. NIMHD remains dedicated to upholding Tribal sovereignty through this ongoing engagement with Tribal Nations, and we value the opportunity to learn how the renewed RC-TEC might advance your goals and strategic priorities. We are seeking your input on the renewed RC-TEC initiative and on the priorities that should shape it.

Participant information:
What: NIH Tribal Consultation on the Renewal of the Resource Center for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC)
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Time: 4:30p.m.- 6:00p.m. PT (5:30 p.m. MT, 6:30 p.m. CT, 7:30 p.m. ET)
Location: In-Person: National Congress of American Indians 83rd Annual Convention, Palm Springs Convention Center, 277 N Avenida Caballeros, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Virtual: Please visit the THRO website at https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/tribal-consultations for Zoom registration information

Please submit any written testimony, comments, and questions to NIHTribalConsultation@nih.gov by end of day, **November 4, 2026**. For program specific information, please contact Dr. Angela Fernandez and Dr. Susan Joseph, Program Officers, Division of Community Health and Population Science, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, at angela.fernandez@nih.gov and susan.joseph2@nih.gov.

I hope that you will be able to participate and provide input on a renewed RC-TEC funding opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the TECs to conduct health research focused on AI/AN populations. Thank you for your continued partnership as we work together to improve the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives through research.

Sincerely,

Monica Webb Hooper

Monica Webb Hooper, PhD
Acting Director, NIMHD