



Chief's Address To The Nation

Greetings,
I trust that this edition of our newspaper finds you and your families doing fine. Now that the tribal Elections are almost over, General Council completed, and the RAP Governing Council in the near future, the upcoming change to the Affordable Care Act health insurance coverage is the most pressing matter before us with October 1, 2013 as the date to start enrolling.



Chief George Thurman

HEALTH CARE. The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also referred as "O'bama Care", has created much concern and alarm to Indian Country across the United States due to the uncertainty of the new health coverage and how it will affect tribes. Our Black Hawk Health Center and governmental staff have attended training across Oklahoma and in Denver, CO to learn as much as possible about its affect on our patients, employees, and tribal membership.

To provide as much information as possible, I include correspondence from the Executive Assistant to Governor Mary Fallin's Native American Liaison and the Chair of the IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (for which I am the Alternate in the Southern Plains Area).

Fact Sheet: The Affordable Care Act and American Indian and Alaska Native People

At the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), tribal consultation is crucial to both a sound and productive Federal-tribal relationship and to the successful implementation of the ACA. Consultation and outreach efforts provide education and information about the law and how it will impact Indian Country while ensuring policies and programs are responsive to feedback from tribal communities.

The ACA will provide 579,000 uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives an opportunity to get affordable health insurance coverage. For American Indians and Alaska Natives, the law will address inequities and increase access to quality, affordable health coverage, invest in prevention and wellness, and give First American individuals and families more control over their care.

The following is an overview of the coverage and benefits available to American Indians and Alaska Natives today and those beginning in 2014 by the Health Insurance Marketplace.

- The ACA permanently re-authorizes the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) and authorizes new programs to ensure that the Indian Health Service (IHS) is more equipped to raise the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

- Tribes or tribal organizations carrying out a program under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act or urban Indian organizations carrying out a program under Title V of IHCIA may now purchase coverage for their employees from the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB). As of July 31, 2013, over 10,000 employees from 53 tribes in 15 states are enrolled in the FEHB. Ten additional tribes have expressed interest.

- IHS and Tribal programs are now starting to receive reimbursement payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for direct care services provided to eligible veterans under the IHS VA reimbursement agreement signed as a result of a new authority in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

- Targeted interventions, such as Community Transformation Grants, promote healthy lifestyles, lower health care costs, and reduce health disparities in tribal communities. Major investments to improve quality of care are improving management

of chronic diseases that are more prevalent among American Indians and Alaska Natives.

- Over the last three years, the IHS has supported the National Indian Health Outreach and Education (NIHOE) project, an effort involving the National Congress of American Indians, the National Indian Health Board, and the National Council of Urban Indian Health and 11 regional entities, primarily Regional Tribal Health Boards, to conduct area specific outreach and education regarding the ACA. As of May 2013, the NIHOE project has completed over 330 trainings with tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian health programs.

Coming Soon: Better Access to Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives

- 579,000 uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives will have new opportunities for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. As many as nine out of 10 of those may qualify for financial assistance either through tax credits to purchase coverage in the Marketplace, cost-sharing reductions that will reduce or eliminate out of pocket costs, or through Medicaid if their state expands eligibility.

- American Indians and Alaska Natives will be eligible to purchase coverage through the new Health Insurance Marketplace. The Marketplace is a destination where consumers can compare health insurance options in simple, easy-to-understand language. At the Marketplace, consumers will be able to compare insurance options based on price, benefits, quality and other factors with a clear picture of premiums and cost-sharing amounts to help them choose the insurance that best fits their needs.

- American Indians and Alaska Natives earning between 100 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) (or \$23,550 for a family of four in 2013, \$29,440 in Alaska) and 400 percent of FPL (or \$94,200 for a family of four in 2013, \$117,760 in Alaska) may be eligible for advance premium tax credits that lower monthly premiums right away. Others may be eligible for free or low cost coverage from the Health Insurance Marketplace.

- Certain American Indians and Alaska Natives who purchase health insurance through the Marketplace do not have to pay co-pays or other cost-sharing if their income is under 300 percent of FPL, which is roughly \$70,650 for a family of four in 2013 (\$88,320 in Alaska). In addition, certain American Indians and Alaska Natives will have access to special monthly enrollment periods so they may get insurance outside the yearly open enrollment period.

- Many American Indians and Alaska Natives will be newly eligible for Medicaid under the ACA. States have new (Continued on Page 18)



Stella Nullake, Sac and Fox BC member, fourth from left, during groundbreaking ceremonies for the Great River Road Interpretive Center in Genoa, Wisconsin (Photo by Sandra Massey NAGPRA)

BC Member Stella Nullake Speaker at Ceremony in Genoa Wisconsin

by Sandra Massey NAGPRA

Committeemember Stella Nullake participated as a speaker in the August 21, 2013 groundbreaking ceremonies for the Great River Road Interpretive Center located in Genoa, Wisconsin.

The day's agenda began at 10 a.m. with the presentation of colors by the De Soto VFW Post 8123, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Rich Maurer of Grace EFCA Church gave the invocation. Hatchery Manager Doug Aloisi welcomed all present and also introduced each of the speakers, who included Jane Carrola, State Representative for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation National Scenic Byways Program; Todd Turner, ARD-Fisheries Region 3; and Congressman Ron Kind, Representative of the 3rd District.



Other dignitaries who attended but did not speak at the groundbreaking were Karrie Jackelen, U.S. Congressional Aide, 3rd District; John Medinger, U.S. Congressional Aide, Senator Baldwin's Office; Jennifer Shilling, Wisconsin State Senator, 32nd District; Lee Nerison, Wisconsin State Representative, 96th District; and Al Lorenz, Chairperson of the Wisconsin Great River Road Scenic Byways Commission.

The Visitors' Center site is located three miles south of Genoa on the Great River Road, which runs parallel to the Mississippi River and is designated as one of the National Scenic Byways. The grant proposal states that the visitors' center site is "actually located on the northern edge of the final [site] of the Black Hawk [conflict]. ...An interpretive display of the Black Hawk [conflict] will be developed with the Sac and Fox Tribes and University of

Wisconsin historians."

"It is our hope that this (exhibit) may promote understanding and healing between our cultures and be a positive force to educate present and future generations," Aloisi said.

The Bad Axe Massacre took place on August 1st and 2nd in 1832 and resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Sauk. The State of Wisconsin offered an official apology to the Sac and Fox Nation in May of 1990, accepted by then Principal Chief Elmer Manatowa. The number of those killed included women, children, and elderly people who had tried to cross the flooded Mississippi to safety. Congressman Kind mentioned their presence in his speech at the groundbreaking ceremony and said this is a part of history that needs to be told.

Nullake prepared no speech but spoke from the heart.

"We all have to live with our history," she said. She pointed out that the Sac and Fox Nation in Oklahoma, the descendants of Black Hawk's band, were survivors, and because of that she could be there to represent Black Hawk and the Sac and Fox people.

The speakers all acknowledged the Sac and Fox representatives and spoke of the need to tell the story accurately.

Aloisi concluded with a quote from Black Hawk, given on July 4, 1838 at Fort Madison, which summed up the feeling of the day, "I have looked upon the Mississippi since I have been a child. I love the great river. I have dwelt upon its banks from the time I was an infant. I look upon it now. I shake hands with you, and as it is my wish, I hope you are my friends."



Upcoming Events 2013

September 8-14

Elders Annual Trip
Laughlin NV

September 10, 5 pm

Sac & Fox Nation
Veterans' Meeting
Elders Bldg Stroud

September 26-27

Elders Health Fair,
Conference &
Olympics

October 9

Elders Advisory
Committee Meeting
Shawnee
10:00 Potluck

December 7

Sac and Fox Elders
Annual Winter Dance
Community Building