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July 26, 2024

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Larry Wright, Jr.
Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernandez
1510 Longworth House Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Telehealth Access for Tribal Communities Act of 2024

Dear Congresswoman Leger Fernandez,

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) – the oldest and largest representative organization serving the broad interests of tribal nations and communities, is writing to express support for the Telehealth Access for Tribal Communities Act of 2024. This legislation is essential to ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries have permanent access to audio-only telehealth services. This is common sense legislation that addresses long-standing health disparities and improves access to quality health care for tribal communities faced with limited broadband access.

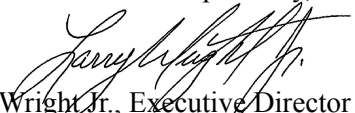
Since 2020 NCAI has requested for the HHS to permanently increase telehealth services for American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) to ensure that the telehealth delivery system remains a viable option for essential medical, mental, and behavioral health services across Indian Country¹.

Tribal Nations across the United States still face broadband connectivity issues, resulting in a strong reliance on telephone communications with their healthcare providers. The Telehealth Access for Tribal Communities Act of 2024 helps increase access to care for our rural, urban and underserved Tribal communities.

For these reasons, I encourage Congress to fulfill its Treaty and Trust responsibilities that are owed to all Tribal Nations and fully support this Act in its attempt at continuing to provide safe, quality healthcare to AI/AN peoples.

Thank you for your continued support in this issue. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 466-7767 or email: lwrightjr@ncai.org.

Respectfully,


Larry Wright Jr., Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians

¹ NCAI Resolution PDX-20-039, Increase Telehealth Access and Funding in Tribal Communities, 2020