



GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMAN'S ASSOCIATION

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GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMAN'S ASSOCIATION (GPTCA)

THE GPTCA HEREBY CALLS UPON CONGRESS TO DEMAND AN EXTERNAL GAO AUDIT OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE, INCLUDING ANY THIRD-PARTY FUNDING THAT IS RECEIVED FROM OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES TO SUPPLEMENT IHS FUNDING, AND THAT SUCH AUDIT BE COMPLETED WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF THE DATE OF ENACTMENT OF THIS RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. 1-4-15-16

WHEREAS: The Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association (GPTCA) is composed of the elected Chairs and Presidents or their duly appointed representatives of the sovereign Indian Tribes and Nations recognized by Treaties with the United States that are within the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

WHEREAS: The Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association was formed to promote the common interests of the Great Plains Sovereign Indian Tribes and their members in the states of North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska; and

WHEREAS: The United States has obligated itself through (but not exclusively) (1) the Treaties entered into with the sovereign Tribes and Nations of the Great Plains Region, (2), the Snyder Act of 1921 as amended, (3) the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 as amended, and (4) the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 1976 as amended; and

WHEREAS: Indian Tribes are governments that pre-date the United States, and through the Indian Commerce, Treaty and Apportionment Clauses and the 14th Amendment, the United States recognizes the status of Indian Tribes as sovereigns and the status of American Indians as tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS: In treaties, the United States pledged to protect Indian Tribes, guaranteed the right of Tribal self-government, and has undertaken a trust responsibility to promote the viability of Indian reservations and lands as permanent homelands for tribes; and

WHEREAS: The United States has a treaty, trust, and statutory obligation to provide and deliver adequate health care to all enrolled members of Tribes and Nations, including those in the Great Plains Region; and

WHEREAS: The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie provided that the United States would provide to the Sioux Bands certain benefits and annuities, including the provision of medical services; and

WHEREAS: The 1868 Sioux Treaty specifically provides for a building for a physician on the Great Sioux Nation and Article 13 of the 1868 Sioux Treaty states that “the United States hereby agrees to Furnish annually to the Indians the physician . . . , as herein contemplated, and that such appropriation shall be made from time to time, on the estimate of the Secretary of the Interior, as will be sufficient to employ such persons.” and

WHEREAS: The legal obligations of the United States set forth in the Treaty, freely entered into by the President and ratified by Congress, never expired and continue to this day; and

WHEREAS: The United States also specifically provided for the provision of medical care in its treaties with the Winnebago; and

WHEREAS: For decades, Great Plains Tribal Leaders have been demanding improved adequate delivery of health care services, including better administration of the Indian Health Service, improved facilities, and most critically, quality patient care; and

WHEREAS: Our calls for improvement in healthcare for our tribal members have not been heard, as shown by the continued worsening condition of the IHS’s delivery of services in the Great Plains Region; and

WHEREAS: IHS suffers from a myriad of failures, incompetence, non-compliance and citations by Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for violations and substandard healthcare, including but not limited to, lack of accountability by Central Office, inconsistent and top heavy administrative management, lack of adequate resources and staff at Reservation Hospitals, poor financial management and lack of funding formulas, and substandard qualitative care; and

WHEREAS: The Omaha-Winnebago IHS hospital has already had its Medicare provider agreement terminated, the Rosebud Sioux IHS Hospital is on diversion status to divert patients from the Rosebud Emergency Department to the hospitals off the Reservation resulting in more deaths & Babies born in ambulances, and both the Rosebud IHS Hospital and the Pine Ridge IHS Hospital is under threat of losing its Medicare provider agreement unless quick resolution is reached by the IHS and CMS; and

WHEREAS: The inadequate quality of healthcare in the Great Plains Region has resulted in actual genocide of our tribal members, who suffer from the highest diabetes death rates, the highest tuberculosis death rates, higher incidences of other diseases than mainstream America, and the lowest life expectancy among all IHS regions in the United States and mainstream America, itself; and

WHEREAS: In February 2016 the Senate Indian Affairs Committee (SCIA) held a hearing to investigate the deplorable health care conditions at IHS facilities in the Great Plains; and

WHEREAS: United States Senator Mike Rounds has confirmed our experiences with the broken IHS system, as shown in the attached briefing that he personally provided to Tribal Leaders; and

WHEREAS: At both the SCIA hearing and a follow-up meeting with Senator Mike Rounds, Great Plains Tribal Leaders urged congressional action to address the horrifying healthcare that our Tribal members are being subjected to; and

WHEREAS: The GPTCA passed Resolution 3-12-18-15 in December 2015 which demands an investigation into the IHS's Great Plains Office and sent a letter to SCIA Chairman Barrasso on March 5, 2016, which requests the SCIA to take swift action to ensure that the IHS and the Department of the Health and Human Services (DHHS) are working to address the immediate needs of Indian people in the Great Plains; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the GPTCA hereby calls upon Congress to demand a GAO audit of the IHS, including any third-party funding that is received from other federal agencies to supplement IHS funding, and that such audit be completed within 6 months of the date of enactment of this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the SCIA carry out the requests included in the GPTCA's March 5, 2016, letter to SCIA Chairman Barrasso, including holding a field hearing in the Great Plains Region to further investigate and examine current healthcare conditions in the Region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the GPTCA urges the United States to adequately fund and staff the healthcare facilities and operations in the Great Plains Region and consult with the Great Plains Tribes to develop a plan to implement meaningful change in healthcare delivery in the Region so the genocide is stopped and our tribal members finally receive safe and adequate health care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, in consultation with Tribal Nations, the GPTCA urges Congress to develop a funding formula for IHS that is based on the true needs of the various IHS regions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the GPTCA demands that the United States honor its treaty, trust and statutory obligations including, among other things, Article XIII of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, to provide and deliver safe and adequate health care to tribal members in the Great Plains Region; and

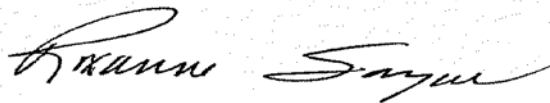
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association unless and until it withdrawn by subsequent resolution.

RESOLUTION NO. 1-4-15-16

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was enacted at a duly called meeting of the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association on April 15, 2016, at Wakpa Sica in Ft. Pierre, SD, at which a quorum was present, with 11 members voting in favor, 0 members opposed, 0 members abstaining, and 5 members not present.

Dated this 15th of April, 2016.



**Chairwoman Roxanne Sazue, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Secretary,
Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association**

Attest:



**President John Yellow Bird-Steel, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Chairman,
Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association**