



Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council

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May 27, 2009

Dr. Yvette Robideaux
Indian Health Service Director
801 Thompson Avenue
Suite 400
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Dr. Robideaux:

The Montana American Indian Caucus (MAIC) of the 61st Legislature congratulates you on your most honorable confirmation to serve as the Director of Indian Health Services. We want to re extend our invitation to you to speak with the Montana Tribes about health care issues in June for an educational event with our friends and allies, Montanans for Health Care and their national affiliate, Health Care for America Now. MAIC and Montanans for Health Care are committed to quality and affordable health care for the first citizens of Big Sky Country.

The current health system is broken. The lack of funding for Indian Health Service has led to many American Indian health disparities. Also the Native communities need more education on chronic illness prevention. As part of a larger effort to bring health equity to health care reform, we'd like to hold an educational forum in MT with your presence and possibly our Senators to discuss issues facing American Indians in MT and federal health care reform. We'll be building on the work of Montanans for Health Care and Indian People's Action first launch event in March calling for health equity for all peoples and most importantly, creating equity and quality care for the first citizens of Montana.

More specifically MAIC is concerned with the lack of funding for clinics in urban areas, uninsured American Indians, the high rate of diabetes among Indians, and the rate of children dying from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome among Indians.

We hope we can collaborate to find a location and date for you to come and speak with Montanans. Please contact Montana American Indian Caucus staff member Jason Smith at (406) 471-4677 or jrsmith75@gmail.com or Molly Moody at (406) 529-8497 or molly@nwfco.org.

Sincerely,

James H. Steele, Jr
Chairman, Montana Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council