



FEBRUARY 2024 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

In February, various updates emerged across state, federal, and Indian Health Service (IHS) sectors impacting Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs). CCUIH attended the Missing & Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Summit & Day of Action on February 12-13, 2024, advocating solutions to the MMIP epidemic, reinforcing the need for public health-centered approaches. The projected \$73 billion budget deficit in California for 2024-25 may challenge UIOs' financial stability, while new workplace violence prevention requirements and the H.R. 7307 Workforce Innovation Act could prompt resource allocation and partnership opportunities. Federally, IHS's \$250M supplemental request to address the Fentanyl & Opioid Crisis offers potential funding for UIOs to expand services, contingent on IHS's commitment to inclusive feedback incorporation. Moreover, IHS's Health IT Modernization Project and the 2024 Agency Work Plan may eventually affect UIOs' electronic health records reporting systems and operational priorities. February 16th marked the deadline for bill introduction at the state level, and next month kicks off with the Indian Health Service (IHS)/California Area Office (CAO) Annual Tribal Consultation & Listening Session from March 5 to 7, 2024, and the Spring Legislative Recess begins March 24th.

IN THE NEWS

- **MMIP SUMMIT & DAY OF ACTION:** CCUIH attended the MMIP Summit & Day of Action on February 12-13, 2024, in Sacramento, CA. This event was hosted by the Yurok Tribe in partnership with Wilton Rancheria. CCUIH Board President Sonya Tetnowski and CCUIH Executive Director Virginia Hedrick spoke on a panel focused on highlighting solutions to the MMIP epidemic that go beyond the scope of law enforcement and are centered in the realm of health.

STATE UPDATES

- **STATE BUDGET DEFICIT:** According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the 2024-25 deficit, which was estimated at about \$58 billion in January, is now projected to be about \$73 billion. This recalculation will have significant impacts on Governor Newsom's proposed state budget. CCUIH will continue to track these crucial budget developments.
 - **Resource:** [2/20 CalMatters Article](#)
 - **Potential Impact on UIOs:** The projected \$73 billion budget deficit in California for the 2024-25 fiscal year poses significant challenges for UIOs. Facing potential funding reductions and increased competition for limited resources, UIOs may experience financial strain, service disruptions, and difficulties in maintaining vital programming for urban Indian populations. Strategic advocacy and resource allocation will be essential for UIOs to mitigate the impact of budget cuts and safeguard access to essential healthcare services for Urban Indian communities in California.
- **CALIFORNIA'S WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION REQUIREMENTS:** Our partners at CPCA have shared that "[Senate Bill 553](#), signed into law by Governor Newsom, requires California employers to establish, implement, and maintain an effective workplace violence prevention plan. Community health centers are not exempt

from these requirements and will need to comply by the July 1, 2024, deadline. [Read more here.](#)

- **Potential Impact on UIOs:** UIOs, operating as community health centers, will need to allocate resources and develop comprehensive prevention plans to ensure compliance with the new law. This may involve additional training for staff, investment in security measures, and revisions to existing workplace policies and procedures. Failure to comply could result in penalties and legal consequences.

FEDERAL UPDATES

- **H.R. 7307 WORKFORCE INNOVATION ACT:** From CPCA “[NACHC] endorsed a new bill that will support health center workforce needs. Rep. Marc Molinaro (R-NY) and Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN) introduced the bipartisan Health Care Workforce Innovation Act (H.R. 7307) earlier this month. The bill would authorize a new grant program to scale up health center-led workforce development programs, such as partnerships with schools, more preceptorships, and innovative career laddering programs. [Click here](#) for a link to Rep. Molinaro’s press release.”
 - **Resources:** [H.R. 7307 Bill Text](#); [Rep. Molinaro Press Release on H.R. 7307](#)
 - **Potential Impact on UIOs:** This legislation would support programs fostering partnerships with educational institutions, expanding mentorship programs, and offering career advancement opportunities. Ultimately, it aims to address healthcare workforce shortages and improve access to culturally competent care.

IHS UPDATES

- **\$250M SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE FENTANYL & OPIOID CRISIS:** During this urban confer session held on February 2, 2024, IHS shared details regarding the Biden Administration's supplemental funding request of \$250M to address the Fentanyl & Opioid Crisis. IHS expressed their commitment to using the feedback received through Tribal Consultation & Urban Confer to create the funding distribution methodology. The deadline to submit written comments following this confer session is March 4, 2024.
 - **Resources:** [DUIOLL](#); [2/2 Urban Confer Session Slide Deck](#)
 - **Potential Impact on UIOs:** With this funding, organizations can expand access to treatment, prevention, and harm reduction services tailored to the unique needs of urban Native populations. Furthermore, the commitment by the IHS to incorporate feedback from Tribal Consultation & Urban Confer sessions ensures that the distribution methodology reflects the diverse perspectives and priorities of affected communities. This funding initiative has the potential to catalyze collaborative efforts among stakeholders and continues to support UIOs to implement comprehensive strategies to address the opioid crisis effectively.
- **HEALTH IT MODERNIZATION ENTERPRISE COLLABORATION GROUP:** During this joint tribal consultation/ urban confer session, IHS shared their updates on the Health IT Modernization Project, including an invitation to join focus groups. The initial 3 focus groups are: Health IT Implementation, Interoperability, and Data Management & Analytics.
 - **Resource:** [DUIOLL](#)
 - **Potential Impact on UIOs:**

- The selection of pilot sites for the Health IT Modernization Project may impact electronic health records (EHR) reporting systems in several ways. First, the implementation of new IT systems may require updates or modifications to existing EHR systems to ensure compatibility and interoperability. Second, the transition to a new system may temporarily disrupt EHR reporting processes as staff members undergo training and familiarization with the new technology. Third, if the new system offers enhanced features or functionalities, it could potentially improve EHR reporting accuracy and efficiency over time.
- **2024 IHS AGENCY WORK PLAN:** On February 22, 2024, IHS announced their new 2024 IHS Agency Work Plan meant to replace the 2023 Agency Work Plan as it is closed out. Priority areas in the 2024 Agency Work Plan include: Patient Safety, Human Capital, Operational, Financial, Compliance/Regulatory, and Strategic.
 - **Resource:** [Fact Sheet - IHS 2024 Agency Work Plan](#)
 - **Potential Impact on UIOs:** UIOs could benefit from this plan, potentially receiving increased support and resources as IHS focuses on bolstering services for Urban Indian populations. Adapting to these changes will be crucial for UIOs to optimize their healthcare delivery and enhance their impact within their communities.
- **DEFINITION OF INDIAN TRIBE:** CCUIH submitted written comments following the January 11 tribal consultation session on the Definition of Indian Tribe.
 - **Resource:** [DTLL, 2/23 CCUIH Written Comments](#)