

U.S. Rep. Moore: Moore, Cole introduce IHS Health Professions Tax Fairness Act

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Washington, D.C. –Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI-04), a member of the Ways and Means Committee, and Congressman Tom Cole (OK-04) and introduced the bipartisan IHS Health Professions Tax Fairness Act. If enacted, this legislation would make Indian Health Services (IHS) scholarships and payments made through the IHS loan repayment program (LRP) tax-exempt. The Indian Health Service (IHS) suffers from long-standing vacancy rates and faces ongoing challenges to filling provider vacancies. To recruit and retain health professionals, IHS offers scholarships and offers loan repayment assistance.

“It is critical that Congress addresses health care provider shortages in IHS facilities, especially given they provide care to the majority of Native Americans and Alaskan Natives,” **said Congresswoman Moore.** “One way to reduce inequities facing these communities and combat this challenge is to exempt these programs from federal income tax requirements, which already exist for similar programs. This change will remove unfair financial barriers preventing IHS from filling crucial jobs and increasing staff retention and will help increase the quality of care for patients. With our bipartisan bill, we help Native Americans enter health professions and invest in the health of their communities.”

“To ensure the federal government meets its trust and treaty obligations to provide health care services to Native Americans and eliminate health care disparities, it is important to improve the ability to recruit and retain health care professionals in Indian country,” **said Congressman Cole.** “While IHS already offers scholarships and loan repayment assistance, making this assistance tax exempt, as it is for other federally-operated health care loan repayment programs, would be an important

tool to help address the severe workforce shortages in Native American communities. I am proud to join in the bipartisan introduction of this commonsense legislation that supports tribal health and economic prosperity.”

The IHS Health Professions Tax Fairness Act has been endorsed by the National Indian Health Board, AI/AN Health Partners, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) and National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH).

Read more about the IHS Health Professions Tax Fairness Act [here](#).