



March 30, 2018

Dear State Unit on Aging Director,

Each year the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) participates in a number of events to support the federal government's commitment to help improve the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives through various health and human services programs administered by the Department. As an operating division of HHS, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) takes part in those events with our focus on the tribal aging population and persons with disabilities.

However, improving the lives of Tribal nations is contingent upon understanding the specific needs of Tribal communities. Tribal consultation is an essential tool in understanding the unique needs and ensuring government to government relations. The Federal Tribal Consultation Policy includes the responsibility of states to consult with Tribes when HHS has transferred the authority and funding for programs to states that are intended to benefit Tribes. States should consult with Tribes to ensure the programs that they administer with federal funding meet the needs of the Tribes in that state. Tribes should be considered full partners by states during the design and implementation of programs that are administered by states with HHS funding.

I am inviting you to consult with the tribes in your state and target tribal members as appropriate. The Older Americans Act (OAA) requires coordination between Titles III, VI and VII in efforts to meet the needs of tribal elders. There are a number of ways that coordination can be accomplished to support these requirements. Wisconsin is an excellent example of state and tribal coordination and collaboration under the OAA.

ACL is actively engaging in several different methods to increase information about tribes, tribal elders and the Title VI program on www.ad.gov. The Title VI program website www.olderindians.acl.gov is linked to the ACL website and provides current information about the Title VI program and contact information for each Title VI program.

I believe that we share a common vision of the future where our nation is strong because every individual and community has the right to reach their full potential. That's exactly what the Administration for Community Living is all about. I am asking for your help to strengthen our partnership with Tribes and improve opportunities for older adults and persons with disabilities across each state. Please contact my office or Cynthia LaCounte with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lance Robertson".

Lance Robertson

Assistant Secretary for Aging and Administrator