

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 7, 2016

The Honorable John Barrasso, M.D.
Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester
Vice-Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Vice-Chairman Tester:

We are writing to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs conduct a hearing on the quality of health care provided by Indian Health Service (IHS) Hospitals in the Great Plains Area.

In November 2015, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent the Rosebud and Pine Ridge IHS hospitals a Notice of Intent to terminate CMS' Medicare Provider agreements with the hospitals. These notices concluded that the hospitals were not in compliance with all of the Medicare conditions of participation for hospitals. Furthermore, on December 6, 2015, the Rosebud Hospital's emergency services were placed on diversion status and will remain on that status for the foreseeable future.

Given the recent issues with the Great Plains Area IHS, along with the findings of a 2010 report conducted by your committee, we respectfully request a hearing into the ongoing failures within the Great Plains Area IHS. Specifically, the hearing should address the quality of health care provided by IHS in the Great Plains. We are concerned about the immediate health care needs of our tribal citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue. We appreciate your hard work on the committee and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator