

The House passed the 7-day CR extension yesterday afternoon. The bill includes an additional 7 days of funding for SDPI, extending funding through December 18th. We are expecting the Senate to vote on the measure this Friday, and for the President to sign later in the day. Once funds are available, the OCAO will move funding to our I/T/U programs through routine mechanisms.

Congressional talks continue on a possible 5th COVID-19 supplemental. Yesterday, the Bipartisan Senate group working to develop an option for an additional COVID-19 supplemental released their [funding framework](#). The bill totals \$908 billion, and includes funding for both economic stimulus and COVID-19 response activities. This bill is one of several approaches currently developing on the Hill, and it is not clear if the Congress will take it up for a vote.

Items of note for IHS:

- \$35 billion for the Provider Relief Fund, of which \$1 billion is for tribes, tribal organizations, urban Indian health organizations, and health service providers to tribes,
- \$7 billion in direct grants for states, territories, and tribes for testing and contact tracing, of which \$350 million to tribes, tribal organizations, urban Indian health organizations, or health service providers to tribes, and
- \$2.58 billion for CDC vaccine distribution and infrastructure, of which \$129 million is for tribes, tribal organizations, urban Indian health organizations, or health service providers to tribes.
- At this point, it is not clear if this funding is transferred to the IHS in the bill, or if the funds would need to be IDDA'd to the Agency. We have emphasized to ASFR that direct transfers to IHS allowing us to use our existing funding mechanisms is our strong preference, in the event that they get the opportunity to provide TA.
- Authorizes states, tribes and territories to enter into interstate compacts or agreements, for the purposes of procuring COVID-19 tests and supplies for such tests
- Extends telehealth flexibility through December 31, 2021.

There are eight remaining days in the current session of Congress.

Travis Watts, PharmD, BCPS
RADM, USPHS
Assistant Surgeon General
Area Director
Indian Health Service, Oklahoma City Area