



## ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN PHYSICIANS

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July 20, 2018

### **Statement by the Association of American Indian Physicians regarding the consideration of John Molina, M.D., J.D. for the position of permanent Director of the Indian Health Service.**

The Association represents over 400 physicians of American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) descent. Founded in 1971, the Association strives to improve the health status of AI/AN people to that level intended by the Creator. Three previous Directors of the IHS have been members of this Association.

The position of permanent Director of the Indian Health Service has been open far too long and heretofore this important position has been filled with at least three different Acting Directors while waiting for a suitable candidate to be nominated for the permanent position. The Association agrees that it is far more important to identify and confirm the **correct** individual than merely to complete the process rapidly.

Dr. John Molina is an eminently qualified candidate who satisfies the minimal qualifications promulgated by this Association. He has worked for Tribes, Indian Health Service and in a management position for the Arizona State Medicaid program. He holds a law degree and is a service veteran. The Association's Board of Directors has scrutinized Dr. Molina's credentials and personally interviewed him and believe he is the correct individual to assume the leadership of the \$6B federal agency known as the Indian Health Service and address the health disparities currently endured by AI/AN people.

We request that Dr. Molina's name be put forth as the nominee for the position of permanent Director of the Indian Health Service at the earliest opportunity.

Respectfully,

Ronald Shaw, M.D.

President,

For the Board of the Association of American Indian Physicians



# AAIP

## Association of American Indian Physicians

### Desired Qualifications for the Director of the Indian Health Service

The national organization of the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) supports the following qualifications for the future Director of the Indian Health Service. The critical decisions upon which the health and, indeed, lives of American Indian/Alaska Native people depend cannot be left to political appointees who do not possess a comprehensive, experiential understanding of American Indian/Alaska Native health any more than the Nation's other health related organizations, such as the CDC and the NIH, can be directed by those without knowledge and expertise in health, research and epidemiology.

#### Qualifications:

1. Health profession, preferably an MD or DO, degree and at least five years of clinical experience.
2. Demonstrated long-term interest, commitment, and activity within the field of Indian Health.
3. Lived on tribal lands or rural American Indian or Alaska Native community or has interacted closely with an urban Indian community.
4. Leadership position in American Indian/Alaska Native health care or a leadership position in an academic setting with activity in American Indian/Alaska Native health care.
5. Experience in the Indian Health Service or has worked extensively with Indian Health Service, Tribal, or Urban Indian health programs.
6. Knowledge and understanding of social and cultural issues affecting the health of American Indian and Alaska Native people.
7. Knowledge of Indian Health Disparities including the pathophysiological basis of the disease process and the social determinants of health that affect disparities.
8. Experience working with Indian Tribes and Nations and an understanding of the Trust Responsibility of the Federal Government for American Indian and Alaska Natives as well as an understanding of the sovereignty of American Indian and Alaska Native Nations.
9. Experience with management, budget, and federal programs.

AAIP, as a national physician organization since 1971, wants to stress how important it is to possess these qualifications. Nowhere in Indian health is the quality and the preparedness of leadership more important than in the Indian Health Service. Critical decisions regarding health care for Native people are made daily and these decisions must be made by leadership knowledgeable in medicine, community health, social and cultural issues in health care for Native people. The Director of the Indian Health Service must have specific knowledge or experience

in health care delivery to American Indian and Alaska Native communities to deliver effective, meaningful healthcare to Indian Country.

In closing, the Indian Health Service director with the above essential qualifications will be able to truly lead the large health care agency that is the Indian Health Service and inspire and lead the Nation's American Indian and Alaska Native people back to good health.

Respectfully

Ronald B. Shaw, MD, (Osage/Creek)  
President,  
Association of American Indian Physicians  
July 20, 2018

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