

**Testimony of Rep. Deb Haaland (NM-1) for  
LaborHHSEd Appropriations Subcommittee Member Day**

Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Cole, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to speak about some key priorities in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations bill. It is an honor to be here, and I appreciate the hard work you do.

My district is blessed with over 300 days of sunshine per year and abundant wind. I urge you to support the swift transition to clean energy and away from dirty fossil fuels that damage public health, which will create millions of high-wage jobs, by investing in worker training and retraining programs.

To prepare students for the 21st century, I encourage you to improve teacher effectiveness, support low-performing schools, and focus on proven efforts to improve student outcomes.

Our nation's future depends on making sure that college is possible regardless of zip code, skin color, or family wealth. I urge you to increase the maximum Pell Grant to make college more accessible, and robustly fund Title III of the Higher Education Act to provide essential support to minority-serving institutions including Tribal Colleges and Title V, which furthers the educational opportunities of Hispanic Americans.

Families should not have to choose between paying their energy bills and affording other necessities like food and medicine. As you know, more than six million low-income households, many of which include children, veterans, seniors, and individuals with disabilities rely on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) program to keep them cool in summers and warm during our cold winter nights. While energy costs have risen, LIHEAP funding has steadily declined, leaving many families unable to cover the energy costs. I urge this committee to ensure that families have the resources to cover their basic needs by providing \$4.7 billion for the LIHEAP program.

We must build an inclusive economy, and so I ask you to scale up investment in YouthBuild, JobCorps, and Corporation for National and Community Service programs that connect people to education, employment, and service opportunities.

My district and State are beset with the opioid crisis and strive to provide behavioral health services and addiction treatment to those in need. I urge you to provide funding to help communities deal with this crisis, including to prevent suicide in all of our communities, including Indian tribes.

As one of the first Native American women elected to Congress and Co-Chair of the Native American Caucus, I urge you to address the serious problems indigenous peoples face.

The federal budgetary needs for American Indians/Alaskan Natives are unlike any other constituency because Tribal Nations have a unique government-to-government relationship with the United States.

The US Commission on Civil Rights has found significant budgetary shortfalls in programs intended to assist the American Indian/Alaskan Native population including those of the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education.

To begin to address this, I urge you to provide \$2 billion for Impact Aid, which provides payments to public school districts whose tax base is impacted by Federal presence or activity, including an Indian reservation. With nearly 93 percent of Native students enrolled in public schools, Impact Aid provides essential funding for schools serving Native students.

I also ask you to provide \$198 million for Indian Education Formula Grants, which are designed to supplement the regular school program and assist Native students so they have the opportunity to achieve the same educational standards and attain parity with their non-Native peers.

I urge you to uphold the well-established government-to-government relationship Tribes have with the United States and provide funding for services that most Americans have adequate access to. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.