

**COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES**  
1324 LHOB & CISCO WEBEX  
July 28, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. ET

**Questions for the Record**

**Legislative Hearing on *H.R. 5549***

**Questions from Rep. Ruben Gallego** for Ms. Elizabeth Fowler, Acting Director, Indian Health Service

1. Ms. Fowler, after many years of planning and work, the new River People Health Center opened on the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) reservation this January. The new state of the art facility will serve all tribes and urban Indians in the Phoenix metropolitan region, while taking an important load off of the Phoenix Indian Medical Center. Unfortunately, I understand from SRPMIC that there have been significant delays in providing funding for the staffing of the facility, forcing the tribe to shoulder a financial burden in the 10s of millions of dollars. Part of the delay is due to the fact that this was a new facility and therefore the funding had to be specifically apportioned by the Office of Management and Budget, adding more than two months of delay for this step alone. If IHS had advanced appropriations in place for this year, would this have sped up the process of getting SRPMIC reimbursed for the cost of operating the River People Health Center?
2. Additionally, in the case of the River People Health Center, can you confirm that IHS will work with Congress to ensure that all information on funding for the staffing package that still needs to be appropriated will be provided in a timely manner to ensure it is included in the FY23 appropriations bill?