April 8, 2019

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| Chairman Pat Roberts109 Hart Senate Office BuildingWashington, DC 20510 | Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow731 Hart Senate Office BuildingWashington, DC 20510 |

Re: **Enact the Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act as a part of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization**

Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow,

On behalf of the **[insert name of Tribe, governing body, or relevant organization]**, **[we/I]** request that you and members of the Senate Agriculture Committee include the provisions of S. 2409, the Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act, as introduced in the 115th congressional session, in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization legislation pending before the Committee.

Native American and Alaska Native children experience the highest rates of food insecurity and nutrition-related diseases, such as obesity and diabetes, in the United States. This is the result of the majority of Indian Country residing in rural food desserts and consequentially, possessing limited access to food and beverages with high nutritional values. For the **[insert name of Tribe]**, **[describe health impacts or the extent to which healthy food is difficult to access].**

It has been proven that school nutrition programs help prevent food insecurity and improve health outcomes by providing access to a healthy diet. However, existing law unnecessarily restricts tribal governments from operating these programs without approval of state agencies despite ample evidence demonstrating that when tribal governments directly administer services in tribal communities, they are administered more efficiently and cost effectively than when operated by state agencies. **[If you operate these programs through your state, detail the problems you run into.]**

Authorizing tribal governments to directly administer the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, in addition to providing start up and administrative funds for the operation of these programs, would allow **[insert name of Tribe, governing body, or relevant organization]** to better ensure that our **[insert name of people – e.g. “Mohawk”, “Dakota”, “Ojibwe”, “Navajo”, etc.]** children have access to a healthy diet that protects them from nutrition-related diseases.

As the future of our **[Tribe, Band, Pueblo, Nation, etc.]** is reliant on having healthy tribal youth, **[we/I]** urgently ask you to include the Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization.

Please feel free to call me or our counsel **[insert contact information]** at your earliest convenience to discuss. Thank you for all you and your staff do for Indian Country.

Sincerely,

**[Insert Signature, Name, Position/Department, and Tribe]**

**CC**

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| Mitch McConnell (R-KY)John Boozman (R-AR)John Hoeven (R-ND)Joni Ernst (R-IA)Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS)Mike Braun (R-IN)David Perdue (D-GA)Charles Grassley (R-IA)John Thune (R-SD)Deb Fischer (R-NE) | Patrick Leahy (D-VT)Sherrod Brown (D-OH)Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)Michael Bennet (D-CO)Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY)Robert Casey, Jr. (D-PA)Tina Smith (D-MN)Richard Durbin (D-IL) |