



**NOTTAWASEPPI HURON
BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI**

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

October 25, 2023

Honorable Cara Anne Poland, M.D., M.Ed
Opioid Advisory Commission
Boji Tower - 3rd Floor
124 W. Allegan St.
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Cc: Vice Chair Patrick Patterson; Brad Casemore, MHSA, LMSW, FACHE; Retired Judge Linda Davis; Katharine Hude, Esq.; Mona Makki; Scott Masi; Mario Nanos; Kyle Rambo, MPA; Sarah A. Stoddard, PhD, RN, CNP, FSAHM, FAAN; Sherriff Daniel Abbott; Tara King

Re: Appropriates Subcommittee on Health and Human
Services Meeting

Dear Chairperson Morse,

I'd like to first express my appreciation for inviting our Tribe to the hearing today, and for your commitment to tribal inclusion and outreach. I apologize for being unable to attend, but I appreciate your time reading this letter.

We are concerned that communication with tribes has been lacking with regard to these opioid settlement funds. Tribal communities have been hit particularly hard by the opioid crisis, so it's critically important to include Tribal Governments in these discussions. MDHHS implemented a Tribal Consultation Policy in 2020, and we'd like to ask for a return to these standards to eliminate some of the confusion that we at NHBP are presently experiencing.

Specifically, we need more information about how the funds will be distributed to Tribes, and how Tribes can go about accessing those funds. We are hoping to see funding specifically designated for our Tribe, so that we are not in the position of competing with state agencies or other tribes. Resources from statewide initiatives are not used to their maximum benefit in tribal communities when Tribal governments are not involved. Tribal governments are in the best position to administer programming that is specific to the unique needs of our communities. For example, NHBP understands the impact that historical and intergenerational trauma

has had on the prevalence of substance abuse in our community. We can tailor our programming to provide trauma-informed and culturally appropriate services to address our Tribal Members' unique issues.

Tribal governments are also in the best position to provide outreach to Tribal Members, and to ensure that those Tribal Members have access to the resources and education they need to prevent or recover from opioid use disorder. NHBP has several mechanisms for proactively reaching out to Tribal Members. Importantly, many Tribal Members, qualifying non-Indian family members, and a number of Michigan Indians from other tribes already receive services through NHBP and have relationships with our HHS staff. Many of our patients feel safer and more comfortable receiving services through NHBP than they would through state agencies because we implement community-based prevention campaigns and programs that integrate NHBP culture, tradition, and community support.

With all this in mind, I'd like to reiterate my request for further information about how tribes can access these opioid settlement funds, and for further consultation on these matters in accordance with the MDHHS Tribal Consultation Policy.

Very truly,



Jamie Stuck 2023 Oct-25 10:05
Tribal Counsel Chairperson
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi