



For Immediate Release
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AICAF supports President Biden's call to end cancer

MINNEAPOLIS, MN -- The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) Board of Directors and Interim Chief Executive Officer Melissa Buffalo, MS (Meskwaki) applaud President Joe Biden's call to "end cancer as we know it" during his recent speech to Congress. The President's continued mission to eliminate cancer, through initiatives such as the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, align greatly with AICAF. As an organization devoted to addressing Indigenous cancer burdens, we welcome increased federal funding and opportunities to collaborate on efforts to eliminate cancer and other disparities that impact our communities.

President Biden's proposal to create an advanced health research agency within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) comes at a crucial time, and we truly believe breakthroughs in cancer research, prevention, and treatment would greatly benefit Native people. Tribal Nations continue to face alarming inequities in cancer incidence and mortality, and we are dedicated to reducing cancer burdens on Indigenous families. While many Americans are celebrating a decrease in cancer diagnoses, rates within our communities continue to rise.

"Our job at AICAF is to engage our communities and meet them where their needs are. This mission is enhanced through partnerships and commitment," said Buffalo. "We believe Native communities have the wisdom to find solutions to cancer inequities, but are often seeking the resources to do so. It is essential that the National Institutes of Health understand the unique needs of Indigenous communities."

Through true and dedicated consultation with tribes and Native-led organizations, federal agencies can gain a better understanding of the cancer burdens impacting Indian Country. We are in full support of increased federal focus on ending cancer, and agree with President Biden that it is entirely within our power to accomplish this.

"We are committed to eliminating cancer in Indian Country," said AICAF Board of Directors Chair Dr. Gary Ferguson, ND (Aleut/Unangan). "Increased federal funding and consultation with tribes and tribal organizations would help us achieve this."

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