June 15, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Brady                              The Honorable Sander Levin  
Chairman                                              Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means                           Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives                        U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC  20515                                 Washington, DC  20515  

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Levin:

We, the undersigned Indian tribal nations, tribal corporations, trade associations and chambers of commerce—collectively organized as the Coalition for Tribal Sovereignty—write in strong support of H.R. 3080, the “Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act,” which would provide relief to Indian tribes by excluding tribal employers from the definition of “applicable large employer” for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).

American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal members are exempt from the PPACA individual mandate due to the trust obligation owed by the federal government to provide healthcare to AI/AN members. However, tribal governments, organizations and businesses are mandated to provide coverage their members already have access to or face tax penalties that could run into the millions of dollars. Perversely, these tax penalties would likely come from funding a tribal entity receives from the federal government for providing services in the areas of healthcare, education, and other important programs under self-determination contracts.

H.R. 3080 is a bipartisan bill that would remedy this hastily-made error in the law and uphold the trust obligation. It would allow vital resources to remain at the tribal level to invest back into tribal services—such as healthcare—important to its tribal members.

The Coalition for Tribal Sovereignty applauds you and this bill’s cosponsors for your leadership on this important issue, requests that the bill be favorably reported from your committee, and looks forward to the full House of Representatives acting on this bill.

Sincerely,

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (CA)  
Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation (MT)  
Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians of the Big Valley Rancheria (CA)  
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa (MN)  
California Association of Tribal Governments (CA)  
Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (AK)  
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe (SD)  
Chickasaw Nation (OK)
Citizen Potawatomi Nation (OK)
Coeur d’Alene Tribe (ID)
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation (WA)
Doyon, Limited (AK)
Elk Valley Rancheria (CA)
Ewiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians (CA)
Fort Belknap Indian Community (MT)
Great Plains Tribal Chairman’s Association, Inc. (SD)
Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe (WA)
Little River Band of Ottawa Indians (MI)
Lower Sioux Indian Community (MN)
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (CT)
Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) (WI)
Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce (MN)
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MN)
Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut (CT)
Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma (OK)
Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians of California (CA)
Naknek Native Village (AK)
National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) (DC)
Native American Enterprise Initiative (NAEI) (DC)
Nez Perce (ID)
Oglala Sioux Tribe (SD)
Penobscot Indian Nation (ME)
Pueblo of Acoma (NM)
Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma (OK)
Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (MN)
Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians (CA)
Sac and Fox Nation (OK)
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe (MI)
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma (OK)
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (ID)
Sokaogon Chippewa Community, Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (WI)
Southern Ute Indian Tribe (CO)
Spokane Tribe of Indians (WA)
Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Tribe (CA)
Table Mountain Rancheria (CA)
Tonkawa Tribe (OK)
Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians (CA)
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma (OK)
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma Corporation (OK)
United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (TN)
Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians (CA)
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (MA)

cc: Members of the Committee on Ways and Means