

Roselyn Tso to serve as the head of Indian Health Service

Written by gallupsun
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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate Roselyn Tso, a member of the Navajo Nation and current director of the Navajo Area Indian Health Service, who was nominated by U.S. President Joe Biden to serve as the new head of the Indian Health Service across the United States.

Nez lauded Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris for their continued support for tribal nations and for putting forth this nomination.

“This is a historic nomination put forth by the Biden-Harris Administration,” Nez said. “Over many years, Director Tso has demonstrated her commitment to public health and the well-being of all people at the federal and tribal levels, which have prepared her for this new opportunity. On behalf of the Navajo people, we congratulate Director Tso, her family, and colleagues. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, her leadership, expertise, and compassion have helped to reduce the spread of this modern-day monster and to save lives.”

As the head of the Navajo Area IHS since 2019, Tso has provided leadership in the administration of a comprehensive health care system. She began her career with the IHS in 1984. She previously served in various roles in the Portland Area, both at the service unit level as the Administrative Officer for the Yakama Service Unit and at the Area level as the Planning and Statistical Officer, Equal Employment Officer and Special Assistant to the Area Director.

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In 2005, Tso assumed the role of Director, Office of Tribal and Service Unit Operations for the Portland Area. In this leadership position, she was responsible for the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act and worked directly with tribes.

Tso also worked with the three urban programs in the Portland Area that provide services ranging from community health to comprehensive primary health care services. In addition, she previously served as Acting Director of the ODSCT in 2010 and 2016-2018.

The IHS, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides federal health care to approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. In 37 states, there are over 605 IHS hospitals, clinics, and health stations located on or near tribal communities. The IHS director oversees the administration of health care programs and services within the agency, including managing the total budget of approximately \$7.4 billion and the employment of more than 15,000 health professionals.

“We have many health concerns throughout Indian Country, and we are confident that with the appointment of Roselyn Tso. With her nomination, we have taken a big step forward to creating more solutions and partnerships that will benefit tribal communities for many generations,” Lizer said. “For over 35 years, Tso has personally dealt with the health care despairs and challenges, and as a tribal member, she will bring value, knowledge, and a greater vision. We congratulate Tso and her family.”

Navajo Department of Health Executive Director, Dr. Jill Jim, also congratulated Tso on her nomination and offered her support.

“Her vast experience will be very beneficial for each of the IHS areas across the country,” she said. “I look forward to continuing to work together with IHS under her leadership.”

Tso holds a Bachelor of Arts in interdisciplinary studies from Marylhurst University in Portland, Ore., and a master’s degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix, Portland, Ore.

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Her nomination will be subject to confirmation by the United States Senate.