

Santee Sioux Nation

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 29, 2023

SANTEE SIOUX NATION SUES FEDERAL AGENCIES OVER SEIZURE OF HEALTH CARE FUNDS

Today the Santee Sioux Nation filed suit against the U.S. Indian Health Service (IHS), Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Treasury over the agencies' unlawful seizure of the Tribe's federal funds utilized for the Tribe's health care, social welfare, and agricultural programs. The suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Omaha, Nebraska, alleges that the IHS reneged on advice it gave to the Tribe over the financing of a health care facility on the Tribe's Reservation in Knox County Nebraska, resulting in IHS seeking to collect over \$3 million in contract reimbursements from the Tribe. Thereafter, IHS sought to recoup these funds by ordering the Department of Treasury to seize over \$17 Million of the Tribe's federal funding needed to operate dozens of tribal government programs.

"So far IHS has seized over \$17 Million of our federal funds to collect on a \$3 Million dollar mistake of IHS' own making," said Tribal Chairman Alonzo Denney. "These actions have created a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. It is beyond shameful that the federal agency charged with providing health care to Native Americans is now illegally seizing funds needed to provide health care and other essential services to our people."

The suit seeks a federal court order immediately enjoining IHS from further seizures of the Tribe's federal funds, and requiring IHS to immediately return the millions of dollars that IHS has over-collected from the Tribe.

The Santee Sioux Nation is represented in the matter by attorneys Conly J. Schulte, Ben Fenner and Aidan Graybill of Peebles Kidder Bergin and Robinson, LLP.

For further information contact:

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