May 29, 1990

Mr. Steve Heeley
Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6440

Re: S1980; The Value of Skeletal Studies for Medical Research

Dear Steve:

At the hearing on S1980, testimony was introduced asserting that there is no medical literature to suggest that any scientific study of Indian human remains have ever benefited Indians from a health perspective. As this did not seem accurate to me, I discussed it with a member of the Society for American archaeology Task Force, Professor Phillip Walker of the Department of Anthropology, University of California Santa Barbara. He provided the following information that I would like to have inserted into the record.

Medical and health sciences journals indexed by the National Library of Medicine from January, 1986 - May 31, 1990 contain over 120 different articles dealing with paleopathology, archaeology and prehistoric skeletal remains. Although these papers contain data relevant to solving the health problems of people throughout the world, many of them are directly relevant to the health concerns of modern Native Americans. For example, skeletal studies have shown that the incidence of cleft palate among Native Americans from the Great Plains is much greater now than it was in prehistoric times. The identification of this difference provides valuable information for use in developing ways to prevent this developmental anomaly. Other conditions studied in this way that are of direct relevance to the health concerns of modern Native Americans include spina bifida, otitis media, tuberculosis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

The following is a bibliography of a few of the recent articles based on studies of prehistoric skeletal remains that are of direct relevance to the health concerns of modern Native Americans:


Kintigh

Dickel DM; Doran GH.

Kursunoglu S; Pate D; Resnick D; Haghighi P; Tyson R; Pitt M.

Loveland CJ; Pierce LC; Gregg JB.

Porter RW; Pavitt D.

Rogers JM; Dieppe PA.

Rothschild BM.

Saluja PG.

Woods RJ; Rothschild BM.

Again, I'd like to thank you for your consideration of our concerns on S.1980. As our testimony indicated, you and Lurleen have made tremendous progress in developing a workable bill. We remain ready to help and look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Keith Kintigh
Associate Professor