

U.S. Presidential Cabinet Members Meet In Washington DC Follow up to September 2008 Leaders' Summit on Health Care in Insular Areas

As a follow-up to "Health Care in the Insular Areas: A Leaders' Summit" held September 29-30 in Hawaii, the Honorable Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior, convened a meeting on November 3, 2008, with the Honorable James B. Peake, M.D., Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Honorable David S.C. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Honorable Joxel Garcia, M.D., Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services. As co-hosts of the leaders' summit and partner



signatories on the Joint Agreement creating the Interagency Coordinated Assets for Insular Health Response (ICAIHR), the U.S. Presidential Cabinet members met to discuss the initial plan for the ICAIHR task force and to review the draft report of the September 2008 summit. Participating in the discussions were senior staff members including Interior's Brian Waidmann, Chief of Staff to Secretary Kempthorne, Doug Domenech, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs and Nikolao Pula, Director of the Office of Insular Affairs. The following are some of the action items that resulted from the various issues discussed.

- Scheduling a meeting, to occur in January 2009, of the full membership of the ICAIHR task force which will consist of at least two permanent authorized personnel from each partner U.S. Federal Department.
- From the summit report, identifying critical infrastructure, equipment and supply needs of the Insular Areas to assist ICAIHR in its assessment.
- Inviting other Federal departments and agencies (e.g., Education, Labor and Agriculture) to attend and participate in ICAIHR to help form the partnerships necessary to improve health care in the Insular Areas.
- Communicating with officials of the Institute of Medicine to discuss a new study on the delivery of health care services within each of the Insular Areas.



The group also approved the release of the draft of the report of the summit proceedings. The draft report is available for review and comment and is located on the website of the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA): www.doi.gov/oia, under "Health Care". The comment period will end November 20, 2008. Please email your comments to Marina Tinitali of OIA: marina_tinitali@ios.doi.gov

It is anticipated that the final report on the summit will be released during the first week of December 2008.

The report on the health summit is not intended to be an action plan. The report is a compilation of the information shared at the event. A full review of the information contained in the report will be completed as part of the assessment of the ICAIHR task force. In addition, the Office of Insular Affairs is reviewing the report information and identifying actions that the Department and other Federal partners, under current authorities, may be able to resolve.

Thank you for your participation in the leaders' summit on Health Care in the Insular Areas, and for your comments on the draft report.



Secretary Kempthorne, Assistant Secretary Garcia, Secretary Peake and Under Secretary Chu