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May 29, 1990

Mr. Steve Heeley
Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6450

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 medius, 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:

Bridges PS.

Spondylolysis and its relationship to degenerative joint disease in the prehistoric southeastern United States. American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1989 Jul, 79(3):321-9.

Cybulski JS.

Brachydactyly, a possible inherited anomaly at prehistoric Prince Rupert Harbour. American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1988 Jul, 76(3):363-76.

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Dickel DN; Doran GH.

Severe neural tube defect syndrome from the Early Archaic of Florida. American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1989 Nov, 80(3):325-34.

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

Bone reinforcement lines in chronic adult osteopenia: a hypothesis. Radiology, 1986 Feb, 158(2):409-15.

Loveland CJ; Pierce LC; Gregg JB.

Ancient temporal bone osteopathology. Annals of Otolaryngology and Rhinology, 1990 Feb, 99(2 Pt 1):146-54.

Porter RW; Pavitt D.

The vertebral canal: I. Nutrition and development, an archaeological study. Spine, 1987 Nov, 12(9):901-6.

Rogers JM; Dieppe PA.

Symmetrical erosive arthritis in Ohio Woodland Indians. Journal of Rheumatology, 1989 Jul, 16(7):1012-3.

Rothschild BM.

Diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis. Comprehensive Therapy, 1988 Feb, 14(2):65-9.

Saluja PG.

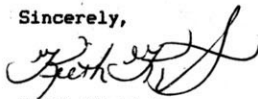
Evidence of spina bifida in skeletal remains from Ireland. Irish Medical Journal, 1986 Jun, 79(6):145-9.

Woods RJ; Rothschild BM.

Population analysis of symmetrical erosive arthritis in Ohio Woodland Indians (1200 years ago). Journal of Rheumatology, 1988 Aug, 15(8):1258-63.

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,



Keith Kintigh
Associate Professor