

KYRSTEN SINEMA
ARIZONA

317 HART BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4521

3333 E. CAMELBACK RD, SUITE 200
PHOENIX, AZ 85018
(602) 598-7327

20 E. OCHOA ST
TUCSON, AZ 85701
(520) 639-7080

<http://sinema.senate.gov>

United States Senate

COMMITTEES

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

May 5, 2020

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell:

Native American tribes in Arizona and throughout the country urgently need improved access to drinking water and sanitation facilities. An estimated 130,000 homes on tribal reservations lack access to running water and adequate sanitation. This deficiency makes tribal residents more susceptible to COVID-19 and other illnesses due to their inability to take basic preventative measures like handwashing. Tribal communities will continue to be disproportionately affected by illnesses like COVID-19 if drinking water and sanitation deficiencies are not addressed.

Challenges faced by the Navajo Nation demonstrate and highlight my concerns regarding tribal drinking water and sanitation deficiencies. The Navajo Nation, where 30 percent of the reservation population lacks access to running water, has one of the highest rates of COVID-19 infections per capita when compared to states throughout the country. It is unacceptable that tribal communities face increased risks related to COVID-19 and other illnesses because of their inability to access running water and adequate sanitation.

As the Senate considers additional legislation to address COVID-19, I urge you to support funding for drinking water and sanitation projects for tribal communities. Specifically, I urge you to consider providing an additional \$985 million in funding for the Indian Health Service's Sanitation Facilities Construction Program to address drinking water and sanitation deficiencies on tribal reservations.

Thank you for considering this request and your leadership in these difficult times. I look forward to working with you to protect the health and safety of all Americans.

Sincerely,



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator