



Michael Mahsetky

Director, Legislative Affairs

Office of the Director

Indian Health Service

Michael Mahsetky, Juris Doctorate of Law, a member of the Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma, is the Director of the Legislative Affairs for the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Mahsetky began his career with the IHS in 1988 as Chief of the Legislative Branch in the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Legislation at the IHS Headquarters. Before joining the IHS legislative team, he served 7 years as a staff attorney with the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

As the Director of Legislative Affairs, Mr. Mahsetky and his staff are responsible for reviewing proposed and pending legislation for the impact it might have on IHS funded programs. His staff is the point of contact for congressional offices and is called upon by those offices to provide technical assistance as well as to present briefings on IHS programs and issues facing the agency. He is also called upon to brief senior staff, Operating Divisions of the Department, and senior staff at the White House on legislative matters affecting Indian health care. His staff is a key component in the advocacy role of the agency in ensuring that legislation that will benefit Indian country is promoted and enacted into law. His staff is also responsible for overseeing the budget formulation process of the agency.

From 1969 to 1980, Mr. Mahsetky worked in the Dallas, Texas, area before entering law school. He helped establish the Dallas Inter-Tribal Health Center in Dallas, Texas, and later served as its director. He also served on numerous health and human rights advocacy organizations such as the Greater Dallas Human Relations Commission and the Goals for Dallas Task Force on Family. In 1978, he was recognized as one of 10 outstanding citizens of Dallas for his contributions to improving the lives of Indian people. The State of Texas also recognized him for his work in children's health care. He also served on the Board of Directors for the American Indian Health Care Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and presented testimony in Congress on the need for health care funding for urban Indians, and later he worked on the first authorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. While living in Dallas, he helped establish the Dallas Minority Repertory Theater and later served as its Executive Director. The theater promoted ethnic and minority actors, playwrights, and stage technicians.

Mr. Mahsetky attended the University of Oklahoma and later the University of Texas, earning a bachelors degree in business administration. He earned his law degree from the Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Mahsetky has received numerous awards for his accomplishments, including recognition from his own Tribe for his work with the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. He has been acknowledged by the Governor of Maryland for his work in promoting cultural diversity in the State; he received the Recognition Award from the University of Michigan School of Law for his work in the field of Indian law, and he has received recognition awards for his work in the IHS. He is a member of the Pi Sigma Epsilon Professional Marketing Fraternity, the Native American Bar Association, and the American Bar Association, where he is a past co-chair of the Health Committee and the Women and Minorities Committee. He formerly served on the community board of the Arena Stage Theater in Washington, D.C., and the Education Opportunity Center, University of Texas in Austin, Texas, and as a board member on the KERA Television Film Advisory Board, Dallas, Texas.