

Amish Shah (D)

Let me start by saying I am grateful for SRPMIC's endorsement and contributions to my 2022 State House race. Thank you for your prior support. As a state legislator in LD5, I helped secure funding for tribal infrastructure in the 2022 budget, ensuring tribal leaders and activists received almost all their requests. This effort earned me the endorsement of our Navajo legislators. As a proven and effective legislator, all my passed legislation (more than any Democrat in the last decade) originated from grassroots door-to-door interactions with constituents. I am dedicated to meeting with any constituent or constituency group to work together. This dedication to service has proven that I listen to all voices in need of justice, not just campaign donors or big-money lobbyists. If elected to Congress, my top priorities are healthcare, education, and democracy. For healthcare, I advocate for universal healthcare and reproductive rights, ensuring all Arizonans, especially tribal communities, have access to comprehensive, high-quality care. In education, I aim to increase funding and support for teachers and schools, addressing Arizona's low rankings in teacher pay and classroom funding. For democracy, I will fight against voter suppression and push for campaign finance reforms to protect free and fair elections. The relationship between tribal communities and Congress has seen some forward progress, particularly with the recent elevation of tribal members like Deb Haaland, Mary Peltola, and Sharice Davids to Congress and leaders in the Biden Administration. However, tribal members have been deeply underrepresented, including in Arizona, which has never had Native American representation in Congress. We must acknowledge that for the majority of American history, Congress' relationship with Native American tribes was defined by broken promises and treaties, deception, and intentional legislative harm. Despite recent progress, there is much work to be done to achieve true representation and justice. Members of Congress should understand that tribal communities face challenges with economic development, healthcare access, and education. Many tribal communities deal with poverty, limited healthcare, and underfunded schools. These problems were often created by bad laws and indifference by Congress in the first place. It's important to know these issues to create policies that really help and address the historical harm done to these communities. Understanding and correcting these past wrongs is essential for building trust and collaboration in the future. Congress can use increased funding for healthcare, education, and infrastructure to better address tribal communities' needs. Fully funding the Indian Health Service (IHS) can improve access to quality healthcare. Providing more support and resources for education can help underfunded schools and give tribal youth better opportunities. Investing in infrastructure, like housing, water systems, and broadband internet, can improve overall quality of life. Additionally, we must respect tribal governance and self-determination through federal legislation. If elected to Congress, I will work to improve the visibility and address the issues facing tribal communities by continuing the grassroots door-to-door approach I have used my entire political career. I will meet directly with tribal leaders and community members to understand their needs and collaborate on solutions. I will advocate for increased funding for healthcare, education, and infrastructure and support laws that respect tribal sovereignty and self-determination. My commitment to grassroots representation means I will always prioritize the needs and rights of tribal communities in my work.