

COMMITTEE REPORT

Veterans Committee

Name of Committee

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
2014 Winter Convention

Silver Reef Hotel Spa Resort
Ferndale, WA

DISCUSSION

Monday - Veterans Committee appreciates the support of the Tribal Leaders, and the concerns regarding the Benefits of their Veterans, Service Members and families related. Housing Committee had requested that Veterans Committee, support the reauthorization of. resolution # ____, for HR Bill #S.1352 for Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2013. To include the Native American Indian Veteran priority. We had some discussion regarding the reauthorization of the same Bill, but agreed that amendments for the Veterans Rent Assistant through HUD VASH programs can be addressed through another resolutions upon the reauthorization of this bill. We also discussed the Office of Tribal Government Relations training and the importance of Tribal Leaders attending this summit aside their Tribal Veteran Representative to best understand the undertaking of the Benefits and services that are needed to provide and the process and problems that exists to protect our Veterans, Service Members and Families. This Summit will be at the Clearwater Casino in Lewiston, Idaho on April 9th and 10th. There will be the Native American Direct Loan, Veterans Treatment Courts, Social Security Administration available benefits that affect our Veterans, Service members and families along with many more categories

We also reported that the Walla Walla VA Medical Center had complied with the resolution #___for the VAMC to report and include the Umatilla Reservation in the process of construction and rehabilitation of the Walla Walla Facility. I also announced the issue in rescinding the resolution #_____ to Support WDVA under the Sequester issues, and why we would be rescinding this resolution. We also explained the issues regarding non-service connected veterans benefits, trust Indian Income and exempt status that has been causing denial of benefits and the incompetence and fiduciary issues making it difficult for those veterans to regain access to their benefits.. We had announced that Senator Murray Staff, would be in attendance and OST would join us to understand and bridge the issues regarding fiduciary issues for Veterans. Richard George, Chair, announced that a member of Housing Committee would attend next session to explain the support required of the Veterans Committee for their resolution

Tuesday – Yakama Nation Veteran, Stanley Miller did both opening prayers for our committee. We were joined by Veteran Soy Redthunder with the understanding and added verbiage of the Housing Resolution and asked for the support of the Veterans Committee. We discussed what the comments were the previous session and mention of the reauthorization of the same bill, through the process of this as stated by Tribal Leader, and Veteran Ronda Metcalf, is that Veterans are already exhausted of process of issues regarding veterans, benefits and services and they are already overwhelmed with services that are promised and does not always take place. We discussed, the Rent assistant program, is a great asset to our troops and families, but counties appropriation does not always include a portion specifically designated funds for our troops. This is an rising issue and will be continued at next ATNI Veterans Committee Session. We also discussed the process and who defines incompetence for our Veterans in the Veterans Benefits system without the use

or network of the Tribal Courts, IIM, Social Services programs or OST. If the Veteran is deemed incompetent by a Veteran Center Employee, there is no notification or network with our Native American Veteran or Tribal Program as the VA does not tag each veteran as a Tribal member. In Speaking with OST the possibility of a pamphlet to disperse to inform the veterans that if they are eligible for the non-service connected pension that they will be aware of process to take and who they will need to contact. We had discussed the issues of gathering data of Native American Veterans and how that data would be used and as how we would justify and utilize the date obtained.

We also discussed the problems of filing claim issues, Miss Babb, Senator Murrays staff member, provided a letter to the Committee attendee in regards to what they could assist with within their office and veterans claims, and also asked the Veterans if there were issued that they would like her to address regarding any issues. She also mentioned that they would discuss the reauthorization of the House Bill 1352 and see where it could be addressed.. We will be retrieving all the information regarding the HUD VASH and data base information and will present it at next ATNI. We will also be including all the VA Directors for next ATNI Veterans Committee in Great Wolf lodge. Thank you. And Veterans Thank you for your service. I am honored to assist and hope to see all the tribal leaders at the Lewiston Training Summit and please safe travels.

ADOPTED AND RECOMMENDED TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution # & Title: Support of WDVA during Sequesters period - Rescinded

Resolution # & Title:

COMMITTEE - TABLED

Resolution # & Title:

Resolution # & Title:

Resolution # & Title:

Minutes/Report submitted by: _____
Committee Chair