



## **2018 Winter Conference Portland Oregon**

### **RESOLUTION #18 – 21**

#### **RESUME NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (NAGPRA) OPERATIONS**

##### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians is a regional organization comprised of American Indians in the States of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians; and

**WHEREAS**, for over two centuries Native American burial sites have been desecrated through the systematic collection of ancestral human remains without the consent of, or consultation with, the affected communities and those remains sat for decades in institutions suffering the indignity of study and/or neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, in November of 1990, congress sought to end this practice through the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA); and

**WHEREAS**, NAGPRA was intended to restore to tribes the fundamental human right to protect the graves of their ancestors by developing a process to repatriate ancestral human remains as well as creating the National NAGPRA Program and NAGPRA Review Committee to oversee the implementation of the law; and

**WHEREAS**, in May 2017, the Department of the Interior has suspended all advisory commissions and initiated a review of the charters and charges of those committees under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Advisory Commissions in an effort to maximize feedback from these boards and to ensure their compliance with both FACA and the President's recent executive orders; and

**WHEREAS**, this review process suspends critical functions of the NAGPRA Program including canceling all scheduled NAGPRA Review Committee Meetings, preventing the review of nominations and appointments to the NAGPRA Review Committee, and freezing the hiring of staff to fill vacant Program positions; and

**WHEREAS**, the suspension of the NAGPRA Review Committee may be temporary but it represents a profound impediment to the implementation of the NAGPRA process from moving forward not only for Native American tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations, but also for museum communities, Federal agencies, and scientific organizations as well as delaying and preventing consultation with tribes; and

**WHEREAS**, NAGPRA states that the work of the Review Committee can only be terminated 120 days after the Secretary of the Interior certifies to Congress that the work of the committee has been completed, 25 USC 3006(i); and

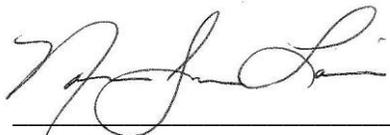
**WHEREAS**, only through funding and staffing of the NAGPRA Program and, resuming regularly scheduled NAGPRA Review Committee meetings, can the implementation of NAGPRA be carried out, restoring tribal ancestors to their homes and communities in order to remedy the harm caused by centuries of desecration and disrespect shown Native American human remains; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI insists there be immediate restoration of the functions of the NAGPRA Program and Review Committee including resumption of Review Committee meetings, as soon as possible, and, authorization of full staffing of the NAGPRA Program, and, immediate action on nominations to the Review Committee.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2018 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the DoubleTree by Hilton - Portland, Oregon, on January 22-25, 2018, with a quorum present.

  
Leonard Forsman, President

  
Norma Jean Louie, Secretary