



2020 Virtual Annual Convention

RESOLUTION #2020 – 36

“TRIBAL REVIEW OF THE 2020 CONGRESSIONAL ACTION PLAN ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS”

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, Executive Orders, 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 to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

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

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes 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 the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, the federal government acknowledges the disproportionate threats of climate change to Indigenous Peoples through administrative and congressional reports such as the 4th National Climate Assessment; and

WHEREAS, federal action must be taken to support the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to adapt to climate change impacts and to reduce their carbon footprints through a range of mitigation approaches, including renewable energy development and energy efficiency, and provide Indigenous Peoples access to the financial and technical resources that are required to assess the impacts of climate change on their cultures, air, land and water, economies, community health, and ways of life; and

WHEREAS, adequate response to the threat of climate change requires action by tribal, federal, state, and local governments; and

WHEREAS, the federal government's treaty and trust responsibilities to protect Indian lands include the duty to protect lands from the impacts of climate change, which requires that sufficient federal resources be equitably allocated to address climate change so Indigenous Peoples can engage effectively in adaptation and mitigation strategies that will help ensure the integrity of their cultures, homelands, infrastructures, and services; as well as enforce tribal treaty and reserved rights to both on- and off-reservation resources; and

WHEREAS, in January, 2019 the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis was established to develop a framework for future climate legislation and conducted seventeen hearing between April, 2019 and February 2020 including seeking direct input from Tribal governments throughout the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis released its Congressional Action Plan (CAP) entitled "**Solving the Climate Crisis: The Congressional Action Plan for a Clean Energy Economy and a Healthy, Resilient, and Just America**" in June 2020. The CAP lays out a roadmap for climate action by Congressional and Administrative Leadership and is structured to promote a set of integrated goals: reach net-zero emissions by 2050; reduce pollution in environmental justice communities; and reach net-negative emissions in the second half of the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, the CAP calls on Congress to build a clean energy economy that values workers, centers environmental justice, and is prepared to meet the challenges of the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, ATNI and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Climate Action Task Force Technical Committee, NCAI staff, regional and national intertribal organizations, tribes, and non-profits recognized the importance of the CAP as one of the U.S. governments most extensive and comprehensive climate crisis action plans developed to date; and

WHEREAS, ATNI lead an effort in collaboration with NCAI Climate Action Task Force Technical Committee members, NCAI staff, regional and national intertribal organizations and tribes initiated a tribal review of the CAP over a 6-week period in August and September, 2020; and

WHEREAS, this Tribal Review was a tribal expert-driven framework to review the CAP, with coordination by a Core Team lead by ATNI. The co-authors coalesced into workgroups, based on interest and expertise. The Core Team hosted a workshop at the virtual 2020 National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference (NTICC), which was organized by the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals. During that workshop, 106 participants representing 97 different organizations, agencies and Tribes from around the nation came together to discuss Tribal impacts, opportunities, concerns and priorities for each of the CAP's twelve pillars.; and

WHEREAS, the report entitled Tribal Review of the CAP 2020 Congressional Action Plan on the Climate Crisis (hereafter, Tribal Review) provides a Tribal perspective on The purpose of the Tribal Review is to provide Tribal Nations, inter-tribal organizations, and other interested parties with a framework of the CAP that will:

- (i) Provide information to Tribal leaders regarding impacts and opportunities, gaps, concerns, and Tribal priorities identified in a critical review of the CAP;
- (ii) Assist Tribal leaders in strategizing to address the priorities and gaps of the CAP;
- (iii) Provide draft language that Tribal leaders may deploy in communications with Congresspeople and others to advance fulfillment of objectives, including Tribal resolutions; and

WHEREAS, the authors of the Tribal Review identified six overarching themes that relate to the fulfilment of the CAP goals:

- (1) increase social-economic resilience to the impacts of an economic transition toward a carbon-neutral economy;
- (2) promote environmental and climate justice while upholding Tribal sovereignty;
- (3) restore ecological resilience, thereby strengthening the federal government's capacity to ensure Tribal access to culturally-valued resources (e.g., First Foods) on Tribal lands, and ceded and ancestral territories;
- (4) assign value to Indigenous and Traditional Knowledges in climate change science, planning, and action, while respecting the requirement for the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples;
- (5) uphold the Federal Trust Responsibility, Treaties, and commitment to formal Government-to-Government relations and Tribal Consultation; and
- (6) uphold and expand institutions relevant to climate governance and science; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Review provides a basis for inter-tribal organizations, Tribal Nations, and indigenous communities to explore responses to federal proposed policies on climate change, based on expert reviews of each climate action pillars; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Review will provide important preliminary findings and recommendations on the CAP for the NCAI Climate Action Task Force and Technical Committee to formulate and advance policy and congressional legislative actions; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby approve the Tribal Review of the 2020 Congressional Action Plan on the Climate Crisis and requests the National Congress of American Indians also adopt a resolution of support of the Tribal Review of the 2020 Congressional Action Plan at the November 8-13, 2020 NCAI Annual Convention (virtual session); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby call upon the NCAI, led by the NCAI Climate Action Task Force and Technical Committee, in collaboration with Tribal governments, regional and national intertribal organizations including ATNI, USET, and others to utilize and build upon the recommendations of the Tribal Review in order to develop and implement: 1) a national tribal climate crisis action plan for 2020 and beyond; 2), a U.S. congressional legislative strategy in cooperation with the Senate and House Select Committees on the Climate Crisis and their members for 2020 and beyond; 3) a public outreach and education strategy; and 4) a tribal advocacy information and materials, promoting tribal climate policy with the U.S. Administration, and advancing tribal climate policy in international climate change forums including the United Nations.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2020 Virtual Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Portland, Oregon, on October 5 – 8, 2020, with a quorum present.

Leonard Forsman, President

Norma Jean Louie, Secretary