



## **2020 Virtual Annual Convention**

### **RESOLUTION #2020-39**

**“SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS TO FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS TO ENSURE THAT TRIBAL GENERAL WELFARE BENEFITS ARE NOT INCLUDED AS INCOME FOR FEDERAL BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY PURPOSES”**

#### **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**, ATNI members provide General Welfare Benefits to their citizens for purposes of improving their quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, under the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-168, 128 Stat. 1883 (codified at 26 U.S.C. §139E) (the “Act”), Congress concluded that the value of General Welfare Benefits should not be subject to Federal income taxation; and

**WHEREAS**, in recent years, Federal agencies such as the Social Security Administration and the Department of Agriculture have determined that the value of Tribal General Welfare Benefits should be counted as income for purposes of benefits eligibility; and

**WHEREAS**, the consequence of such action is that Tribal citizens are being denied Federal benefits such as Social Security and food stamps (SNAP) because their Tribes are providing them General Welfare Benefits; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI calls on Federal Agencies and the Congress to take such administrative or legislative action, including Tribal government consultation, as may be necessary to ensure that Tribal General Welfare Benefits are not counted as income for purposes of Federal benefits eligibility; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution be forwarded to regional and national forums, not limited to the National Congress of American Indians, United South & Eastern Tribes, California Association of Tribal Governments, Native American Finance Officers Association, the Great Plains Tribal Chairman’s Association, and the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes.

**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.

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Leonard Forsman, President

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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary