



## **2022 Virtual Winter Convention**

### **RESOLUTION #2022 – 03**

#### **“SUPPORT FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE”**

### **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 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 ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, the Federal government of the United States has a unique and special relationship with American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) to provide health care as established through the U.S. Constitution Treaties with Indian Tribes, U.S. Supreme Court decisions and Federal legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, the unmet health needs of AI/ANs are severe and the health status of AI/ANs is far below that of the general population of the United States, resulting in an average life expectancy for American Indians and Alaska Natives 4.2 years less than that for the U.S. all races population; and

**WHEREAS**, the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, addresses these disparities by administering health care to over 2 million AI/ANs residing in Tribal communities in 37 states, directly, or through contracts or compacts with Tribes and Tribal organizations under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act; and

**WHEREAS**, IHS has not had a permanent director since the Biden Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, the appointment of a director to IHS will further affirm the Biden Administration's commitment to fulfilling the federal government's trust responsibility to protect the interests of Indian Tribes and communities; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians calls on President Joe Biden to nominate an IHS Director in order to ensure that IHS has a leader who can set forth a vision to address the health disparities that AI/AN people face; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2022 Virtual Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Portland, Oregon, on January 24-27, 2022, with a quorum approving.

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Leonard Forsman, President

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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary