



2023 Midyear Convention Worley, Idaho

Resolution #2023 – 37

“Request Biden Administration to Maintain or Increase Department of Veterans Affairs Budget

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, Native American veterans and Alaska Natives have served the largest per capita within any theater throughout all military actions, war, in peacetime; and

WHEREAS, the new Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act covers expanded disabilities and ailments; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration is proposing to cut the Department of Veterans Affairs budget by 22%; which will decrease the amount of veteran health care services, including mental health care, in a system that is already in distress; and

WHEREAS, this will delay time for veterans who are aging and realizing they may have disabilities covered under the PACT Act that have not yet been addressed; and

WHEREAS, the passing of the copayment exemption for Tribal veterans will diminish all purpose to move forward in Indian Country for veterans who truly deserve the best of care and quality of life; now

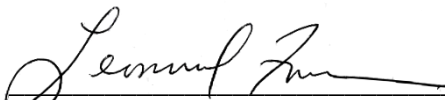
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI Veterans Committee, strongly requests that the Biden Administration research and amend this budget in the favorable interest of Tribal Veterans and Veterans alike, and not affect any benefits provided to veterans including all tribes of veterans; and

BE IT FURTHER, RESOLVED, that the Biden Administration not reduce the amount of the Department of Veterans Affairs budget, and include a set-aside for Tribes to sustain tribal veteran programs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI strongly encourages the Biden Administration to find additional sources to fulfill the obligation that the United States government promised to all veterans to make sure of their quality of life for all that they gave.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2023 Midyear Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort - Hotel in Worley, Idaho, on May 8-11, 2023, with a quorum present.


Leonard Forsman, President


Norma Jean Louie, Secretary