



## **2024 Winter Convention Portland, Oregon**

### **RESOLUTION #24 – 06**

#### **“RESPECTING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND PROTECTING TRIBAL VOTING RIGHTS IN THE STATE OF OREGON’S REDISTRICTING PROCESS”**

#### **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**, Tribal Nations must continue to protect sovereignty at the federal, state, and local level, and citizens of Tribal Nations are unique in that they are also citizens of federal and state governments; and

**WHEREAS**, to protect sovereignty, citizens of Tribal Nations must have opportunities to vote their preferences in fair and equitable local, state, and federal elections; and

**WHEREAS**, redistricting is the periodic redrawing of electoral districts to ensure a fair map that provides equal access to representation and resources in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, fair redistricting will help ensure equal access to resources and representation for everyone, especially our tribal citizens and communities in the Northwest. Tribes want to ensure the boundaries on district maps do not divide us and our respective interests and do not restrict our access to political power and resources; and

**WHEREAS**, if our Tribes and tribal voters can engage fully in the political system—free from the barriers that currently obstruct us—we can reclaim power and participate in a way that is fair and just; and

**WHEREAS**, electoral reforms, including redistricting reform should begin with input from Tribal Nations and Communities, and respect the sovereignty of Tribal Nations, which will achieve equitable representation; and

**WHEREAS**, states must provide the option and resources for Tribal Nations to select voting members of redistricting commissions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon legislature did not consult with Tribal Nations in the 2021 legislative and congressional map drawing process, resulting in the racial gerrymandering of the Klamath Tribes and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Tribal Communities, effectively disenfranchising the voting rights of Tribal citizens of these communities; and

**WHEREAS**, People Not Politicians, the Oregon political action committee did not consult Oregon’s Tribal Nations before drafting Oregon Initiative Petition 14, which calls for an independent commission for redistricting; and

**WHEREAS**, the report “Stronger Together: Native Americans’ Fight for Fair Redistricting” commissioned by the National Congress of American Indians, Common Cause Oregon, and Tribal Democracy Project studying the outcomes for Tribal Communities nationwide after redistricting recommends recognizing Tribal Sovereignty and legally enshrining redistricting processes that: facilitate and provide resources for a process that gives Tribal Nations the option of selecting at least one redistricting commissioner; if Tribal Nations choose to forego this option, there should be representation from Tribal Nations in the decision-making room and/or there should be a requirement for Tribal Nations’ input as to the selection of redistricting commissioners. The report further recommends to resource Native-led organizing-early and often -throughout both the Census and redistricting process; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI supports redistricting reforms that recognize the sovereignty of Tribal Nations throughout the reform process, and address the systemic voting barriers and disenfranchisement of Tribal Nation citizens. ATNI supports a process of redistricting commissioner selection that requires Tribal Nations’ input, and resources the option for Tribes to select at least one voting redistricting commissioner. ATNI calls for Tribal Nations to invest in community work to raise awareness of the importance of Tribal Sovereignty and the role of redistricting reform in protecting sovereignty; and


**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI opposes Oregon Initiative Petition 14 as it relates to changing Oregon’s redistricting process to an independent commission because the

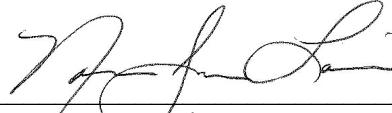
proposed Initiative does not respect Tribal Sovereignty, does not allow for Oregon’s Tribes to have the option for selecting voting commissioners, and does not require a Tribal representative in the decision-making room and/or require Tribal Nations’ input as to the selection of redistricting commissioners; 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 2024 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency, Portland, OR, January 28 – February 31, 2024, with a quorum present.

  
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Leonard Forsman, President

  
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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary