



2024 Midyear Convention Canyonville, Oregon

RESOLUTION #24 – 16

“SUPPORT FOR ESTABLISHING A WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON ADVANCING EQUITY, PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE RELIGIOUS AND CEREMONIAL RIGHTS”

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 American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978 and AIRFA Peyote amendments of 1994 were enacted in order to ensure free exercise to American Indian practitioners of the Peyote ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional intent of AIRFA included the preservation and protection of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian, religions, traditions, ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, there exist numerous barriers to the fullest expression of free exercise including access to sacred sites, medicine, food and clean water; and

WHEREAS, a lack of enforcement of AIRFA and lack of clear policy goals linked to AIRFA have led to the continuance of barriers preventing free exercise; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians Peyote Task Force, Native American Church of North America in a consultative and collaborative process have adopted a draft Proposed Executive Order (draft EO) entitled “*Establishing White House Initiative On Advancing Equity, Protection, And Preservation Of American Indian And Alaska Native Religious Freedom*”; and

WHEREAS, the draft EO aims to strengthen the implementation of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act; and

WHEREAS, the draft EO establishes:

- 1) Policy Statement
- 2) Mobilize Executive Agencies
- 3) Establish Interagency Working Group through WHCNAA
- 4) Establish White House Initiative; and

WHEREAS, this resolution is offered in loving memory and honor of Ted Strong (Yakama) and Dave Matheson (Coeur d’Alene); now

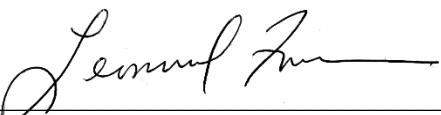
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI affirms its support for the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Peyote amendments of 1994; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI supports the enclosed draft proposed Executive Order entitled “*Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, And Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom*”; 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 Midyear Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Seven Feathers Casino in Canyonville, OR, May 19 – May 23, 2024 with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary