



2024 Annual Convention Ridgefield, Washington

RESOLUTION #2024 – 54

“PRESERVATION OF TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY IN THE BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT FUND ACCEPTANCE”

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 natural, 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 enjoy inherent sovereign immunity as part of their trust relationship with the United States, ensuring that their rights as sovereign entities are respected in dealings with federal, state, and local governments; and

WHEREAS, the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program presents significant opportunities to deploy broadband services on Tribal lands, critical for economic development, healthcare, education, and public safety; and

WHEREAS, states are requiring Tribal Nations to waive sovereign immunity as a condition of receiving BEAD funds, citing concerns over fund recovery in the event of noncompliance; and

WHEREAS, such requirements unduly infringe on Tribal sovereignty, making it difficult for Tribes to participate in BEAD while retaining their rights; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Transportation have established intergovernmental fund transfer processes that preserve Tribal sovereignty while ensuring program compliance; now

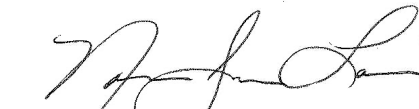
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI calls upon the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA), Department of the Interior, and state governments to collaborate on implementing intergovernmental fund transfer processes that respect Tribal sovereignty, allowing for effective broadband deployment on Tribal lands without requiring waivers of sovereign immunity.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2024 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians, held at ilani Casino Resort, Ridgefield, Washington on September 29 – October 3, 2024 with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary