



**ATNI Winter 2025 Convention  
Portland, Oregon**

**RESOLUTION # 2025 – 11**

**“RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING TO CEASE HARASSMENT OF  
SOVEREIGN TRIBAL NATIONS, TO RESPECT TREATY RIGHTS, AND  
TO SUPPORT INTER-TRIBAL COMMERCE”**

**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 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 the representatives and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, the ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and Indian tribal governments 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**, inter-tribal trade has stood as a cornerstone for inter-tribal economics since time immemorial; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous treaties were negotiated between the United States government and tribal nations and remain the supreme law of the land; and

**WHEREAS**, many of these treaties expressly acknowledge the preservation of inter-tribal trade; and

**WHEREAS**, tribes have exercised their inherent sovereign authorities and established tribal economic enterprises to continue the proliferation of intertribal trade, including tribal retail fuel stations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Washington Department of Licensing (the Department) has approached multiple tribal fuel enterprises, falsely alleging that tribal nations are violating their fuel tax compacts with the state by purchasing untaxed fuel, despite the fact that such fuel is exempt from “applicable” state taxes under treaty; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department’s actions undermine tribal sovereignty by attempting to interfere with the sovereign decision-making of tribal nations regarding their business relationships and by threatening the revocation of fuel tax compacts without any legal or factual basis; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department has also placed these tribal nations’ fuel retail stations on an IFTA Untaxed Fuel List, further interfering with inter-tribal commerce and predetermining the state tax is applicable, in direct violation of previous court rulings and the principles of good faith government-to-government relationships; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department’s actions are predatory, prejudicial, discriminatory, abusive, deceptive, and in direct violation of tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and the principles of intergovernmental respect; and

**WHEREAS**, the sovereignty of tribal nations includes the inherent right to engage in commerce with any business of their choosing, free from harassment, coercion, or interference by state agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, these actions by the Department represent a broader threat to the historical tradition of inter-tribal trade, tribal self-determination, and the economic development of tribal nations, all of which are essential to the well-being of tribal communities; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) calls on the Washington State Department of Licensing to immediately cease its harassment of tribal fuel retailers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI demands that the Department respect previous court decisions, and urges the Department to honor the good faith government-to-

government relationship it claims to uphold and cease all actions that interfere with the sovereignty and economic self-determination of tribal nations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI calls on the State of Washington to respect the historical tradition of inter-tribal trade and commerce, as well as the sovereign rights of tribal nations to make their own decisions regarding trade and business relationships; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI encourages the State of Washington to respect inter-tribal commerce and economic development, rather than impose unnecessary burdens and barriers on tribal nations and their business partners; and

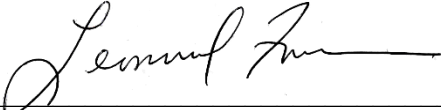
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the ATNI calls on the State of Washington and its Department of Licensing to begin government-to-government consultations with those tribes impacted by the Department’s actions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI will continue to monitor this situation and take appropriate action to support its member tribes and their treaty rights, sovereignty, and economic development; now

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution be forwarded to regional forums.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians 2025 Winter Convention held at the Hilton Portland Downtown in Portland, Oregon on January 26-30, 2025, with a quorum present.

  
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Leonard Forsman, President

  
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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary