



**ATNI Midyear 2025 Convention
Airway Heights, Washington**

RESOLUTION # 2025 – 24

**“SUPPORT FOR ELEVATING THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
DIRECTOR POSITION TO AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY WITHIN THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES”**

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, health care is a key priority for Northwest Tribal Nations and their Tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, the United States has a sacred Trust responsibility and Treaty obligation to provide health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN); and

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Service (IHS), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including Medicare, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), are agencies and programs that are intended to fulfill the sacred Trust responsibility and Treaty obligations to provide health care to AI/AN; and

WHEREAS, the IHS serves approximately 2.8 million AI/AN representing citizens from 574 federally recognized tribes in 37 states; and

WHEREAS, the IHS provides health service delivery system, including primary care and disease prevention; and

WHEREAS, a number of statutes relating to Indian health have been passed by Congress, and many of them are administered by HHS; and

WHEREAS, these statutes are based on the sovereign political relationship between Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Nations and their citizens from the 574 Tribal Nations have unique needs, languages, and traditional and cultural practices that non-Tribal systems cannot meet; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that the unique needs of AI/AN and Tribal Nations are met in the health care system, and based on the sovereign political relationship between Tribal Nations and the United States, HHS, the IHS should have an Assistant Secretary for Indian Health similar to within HHS who will actively participate in the formation of policy towards Indian health issues in the United States; and

WHEREAS, elevating the Indian Health Service Director position to an Assistant Secretary for Indian Health has been a long-standing request of Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, it is of critical importance that such a position be created now while HHS is under reorganization by the Administration; now

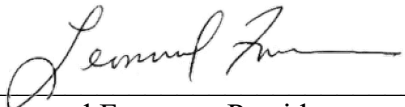
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby request that the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in consultation with Tribal Nations, create the position of an Assistant Secretary of Indian Health as soon as possible; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to NCAI for consideration; and

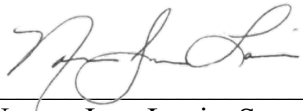
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by a subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians 2025 Midyear Convention held at the Northern Quest Resort and Casino in Airway Heights Washington on May 11-15, 2025, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary