



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

**RESOLUTION # 2025 – 26**

**“PRESERVING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
(HHS) PROGRAMS FOR TRIBAL NATIONS: ADDRESSING PROPOSED  
FY2026 BUDGET CUTS AND PROGRAM ELIMINATIONS IN THE  
PRESIDENT’S DRAFT PROPOSAL”**

**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**, reports have surfaced that a draft of the President’s FY26 Budget Proposal for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) from the Office of Management and Budget reveals alarming plans to eliminate critical programs, including, but not limited to,

several programs administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the Administration for Community Living (ACL), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA); and

**WHEREAS**, some of the programs proposed for elimination include Head Start, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Community Services Block Grant, Elders Justice and Adult Protective Services, Developmental Disabilities Protection and Advocacy, Circles of Care, Project Launch, and the Tribal Behavioral Health Grants (focused on substance abuse prevention and mental health); and

**WHEREAS**, there are 150 Head Start, and 58 Early Head Start programs operated by federally recognized tribes, or consortia, across 26 states, that integrate culture and language into early childhood education, childcare, parent education, health services, and comprehensive family services that are tailored to meet local needs, while also providing employment opportunities to thousands of childhood development specialists and other service providers that strengthen the early childhood workforce in tribal communities; and

**WHEREAS**, 149 tribes and tribal organizations in 25 states receive LIHEAP funds allowing them to directly operate LIHEAP programs that support low-income households with home energy costs, ensuring families stay safe in harsh weather conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, SAMHSA programs, like Circles of Care, Native Connections, and Tribal Behavioral Health Grants are the only funds that allow tribes to develop and operate community-based children and youth mental health systems, and do not require tribes to compete with states to receive funding; and

**WHEREAS**, these are frontline programs that together allow tribal nations, as sovereign governments, to create a comprehensive network of social services to meet the unique needs of tribal communities, support self-sufficiency and economic mobility, reduce risk of abuse and neglect, address the impacts of trauma, avoid more acute crises, and utilize cultural and community strengths to create safe and stable families and healthy communities; now

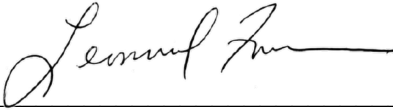
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI hereby opposes the elimination of these programs in the President's FY26 Budget Proposal, and supports the preservation of all Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs that provide essential health and human services to Native children, families, elders, tribal citizens with disabilities, and tribal communities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI requests HHS leadership immediately consult with tribal nations to examine the basis of proposals to eliminate HHS programs accessible to tribes to discuss impacts and development of alternative proposals that preserve health and human service programs that promote economic stability, safe and stable families, and healthy tribal communities; 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 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.



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Leonard Forsman, President



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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary