



2009 Annual Conference Tacoma, Washington

RESOLUTION #09 - 64

“SUPPORT OF THE RIGHTS OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES, ALASKA NATIVE CORPORATIONS AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION 8(A) PROGRAM AND FOR A STRONGER SURETY BONDING GUARANTEE PROGRAM”

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 representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians 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, Indian reservations and Alaska Native Villages suffer from some of the lowest poverty level in this country with unemployment levels up to 75% and, because of the

lack of resources and economic development opportunity, there are few individual and Tribal entrepreneurship on American Indian reservations and Alaskan Native tribes; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government buys over \$200 billion in goods and services annually, and has a statutory goal of awarding at least 23 percent of its purchases to small and disadvantaged businesses; and

WHEREAS, one of the most successful Federal initiatives has been including Native American Tribes and corporations in the US Department of Commerce Small Business Administration's (SBA) 8(a) Program; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations have only recently become successful participants in the SBA 8(a) Program and Native American communities are just beginning to experience the benefits of the program; and

WHEREAS, there have been attempts made to narrow these rights without the benefit of Congressional hearings and accurate information on Native contracting rights, Native contracts and the economic benefits that federal contracting dollars have provided for Native communities; and

WHEREAS, that ATNI recognizes that the participation of Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations in the SBA 8(a) Program has been an important tool in building a strong American Native economy; and

WHEREAS, ATNI recognizes that the participation of Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations in the national economy, and in government programs designed to meet the needs of First Americans, is critical to all parties and is based on the fact that indigenous Native Americans have, historically, been unfairly and dramatically underrepresented among the various ethnic classes of 8(a) contractors contracting with the federal government; and

WHEREAS, ATNI also recognizes that the Surety Bonding industry is a serious impediment for the Tribes and Tribal citizen businesses including those that reside on reservation, trust, allotment and fee lands to secure governmental and public contracts because of restricted access and excessive financial securities, as well as unreasonable requirements for waivers of sovereign immunity; and

WHEREAS, ATNI understands that the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is entertaining developing a Surety Bonding Guarantee Program and that SBA has a program that has limitation to its effectiveness to assist Tribes and Tribal citizen's businesses in accessing these services; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress hold hearings and examine the economic and social needs of First Americans and the success of Federal programs intended to address those needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI strongly opposes any congressional amendment, regulatory changes or other means to diminish, alter, denounce or abolish the current rights established in the federal 8(a) procurement system allowing Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations to create economic development for the benefit of their respective reservations, communities and villages; and

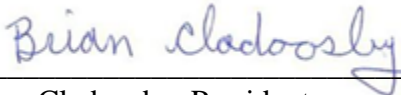
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI urges the BIA and SBA establish and strengthen their Surety Bonding Guarantee Programs to assist Tribes and Tribal citizens in securing affordable Surety bonds with reasonable conditions and affordable rates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI is instructed to submit this resolution to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) at its next Annual Session for consideration; 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 2009 Annual Conference of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center, Tacoma, Washington on September 21 - 24, 2009 with a quorum present.



Brian Cladoosby, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary