



2010 Annual Conference Spokane, Washington

RESOLUTION #10 - 61

"READVERTISE THE DIRECTOR POSITION FOR THE OFFICE OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS"

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 to 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/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 the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Affairs (VA) has issued a position announcement for the Director for the Office of Tribal Government Relations which is a new position created to lead, manage, and direct the process of consultation between the VA and tribal governments in the development and implementation of laws, regulations, policies, and memoranda by the VA to

improve programs and services to Native American Veterans and serve as a liaison to Congress;
and

WHEREAS, there is a historic lack of consultation with American Indians/Alaska Native (AI/AN) veterans and the VA is attempting to address this problem as described in the VA position description of the newly created directorship; and

WHEREAS, the VA will consider noncompetitive appointments to this position “if you are current or career Senior Executive Service (SES), Career Development Plan (CDP) graduate, or have reinstatement rights as a former career SES;” and

WHEREAS, the ATNI Veterans Committee believes the narrow definition for a non-competitive applicant disqualifies several well qualified AI/AN applicants; and

WHEREAS, the ATNI Veterans Committee believes this position is critical for ensuring that Native veterans are better served and it is imperative that the Director have an intimate knowledge and relationship with American Indian customs, beliefs, traditions, and community; and

WHEREAS, having a Native American who is also veteran or an individual eligible under the Veterans Act point preference in this position will provide the most experienced resource to be able to meet the needs of all Native veterans; now

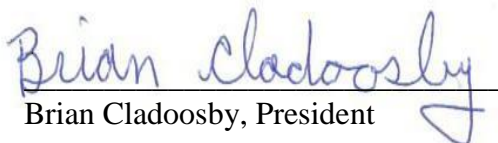
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby request the VA to close the job opening and readvertise for the Director position, change the qualifications to include a GS 15 level, and open the position to applicants outside of the VA system; and

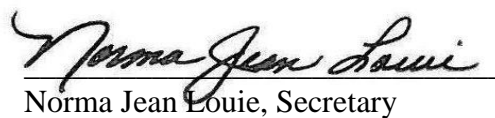
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI requests tribal representation on the Selection Committee for this directorship including direct involvement with the interview questions; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the VA should engage the National Congress of American Indians Veterans Committee in coordination with Tribal Veteran Organizations to identify Selection Committee representation.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2010 Annual Conference of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Northern Quest Resort and Casino in Spokane, Washington, September 20-23, 2010 with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President


Norma Jean Louie, Secretary