



2013 Mid-Year Convention Airway Heights, Washington

RESOLUTION #13 - 35

“OPPOSE EFFORTS BY THE STATES OF COLORADO AND MINNESOTA TO RENEGE ON THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TUITION WAIVERS FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS”

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 federal government has a moral and legal responsibility – as yet unfulfilled – to the federally recognized tribes with which it signed treaties in exchange for more than one billion acres of land and the resources contained therein; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments and the United States Government have chartered 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) to ensure that high quality, culturally based higher education is accessible to American Indian people who were largely excluded from state supported higher education programs; and

WHEREAS, these 37 TCUs operate more than 75 campuses in the 15 states within geographic boundaries where the majority of American Indian reservations and federal Indian trust lands lie; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Colleges and Universities prepare and educate more than 88,000 American Indian and Alaska Natives in academic and community education programs, and these students represent more than 250 federally recognized Indian tribal nations, including the 10 largest federally recognized Indian tribes; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Colleges and Universities fulfill a fundamental role in maintaining, preserving and revitalizing irreplaceable American Indian and Alaska Native languages and cultural traditions and strengthens indigenous peoples worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the federal government currently appropriates \$5,665 per full-time Indian student to the tribally-chartered colleges and universities that are funded under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act, an Act established due to binding treaty obligations and the federal trust responsibility; and

WHEREAS, a bill introduced in the 112th Congress called for the federal government to assume the responsibility for the cost of tuition for the non-state resident American Indians and Alaska Natives who choose to attend Fort Lewis College and University of Minnesota-Morris, which costs are \$16,072 and \$11,720 respectively; and

WHEREAS, the states of Colorado and Minnesota, in accepting the transfer of land and facilities from the United States Government, readily agreed to provide free tuition for all Native students enrolled in their institutions in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, there has been no offer to return transferred land and facilities, but rather a proposal that the federal government assume the states' obligations made in exchange for said land and facilities; and

WHEREAS, the tribes of ATNI support tuition waivers for Native students by specific states as a mean to advance the educational achievement of Native students where ever they choose to attend higher education; and

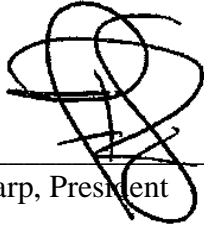
WHEREAS, the funding of the TCUs at the level authorized by Congress – a primary responsibility of the federal government that has never been realized – is less than half of the out of state tuition rate for Fort Lewis College; and

WHEREAS, federal funds should not be allocated to relieve states of a state commitment and legal responsibility to the federal government and American Indian/Alaska Native people that was willingly assumed in exchange for land, resources and facilities; now

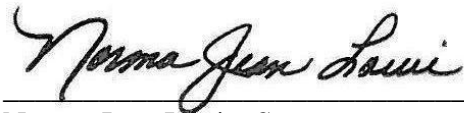
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby opposes any effort to transfer to the federal government a state responsibility, willingly agreed to in exchange for land or facilities, to provide for the cost of tuition waivers for American Indian and Alaska Natives, until all TCUs are and remain fully funded.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2013 Mid-Year Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Northern Quest Resort Casino, Airway Heights, Washington on May 13 – 16, 2013 with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary