



2013 Annual Convention Worley, ID

RESOLUTION #13 - 67

“URGING CONGRESS TO EXEMPT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM BUDGET CUTS DUE TO SEQUESTRATION”

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 trust, treaty and statutory obligation to the federally recognized Indian tribes which signed treaties in exchange for more than one billion acres of land and the resources contained therein; and

WHEREAS, Congress and Administration have a unique relationship and responsibility with every federally recognized Indian tribe, to respect, honor and expand tribal sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, the sovereignty of federally recognized Indian tribes is being weakened in part due to the lack of the federal government's duty to honor all of its obligations, especially higher education, to federally recognized Indian tribes; and

WHEREAS, since time of colonialism, modern Western civilization was forced upon federally recognized Indian tribes and mainstream higher education became a necessity while continuing to preserve, protect and promote culture, traditions, heritage and way of life; and

WHEREAS, higher education is critical for ATNI and our tribal members and helps reduce poverty, high unemployment rates and economic distress; and

WHEREAS, ATNI member tribes have supported the Northwest Indian College which operates a total of 7 campuses in Washington and Idaho; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaskan Native tribal governments and the U.S. government have chartered 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which operate more than 75 campuses in 15 states within those geographic boundaries the majority of American Indian reservations and federal Indian trust land lie; and

WHEREAS, TCUs prepare and educate more than 88,000 American Indian and Alaskan 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, TCUs offer its students a culturally relevant and community based higher education, designed to meet the needs of American Indians who face socio-economic challenges; 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, TCUs endured more than a 5% budget cut to their operational budgets in FY 2013 due to the first round of sequestration budget cuts, which was significant given that TCUs have *never* received full funding based on their appropriation authorized by Congress — roughly 70% of \$8,000 in FY 2012; and

WHEREAS, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the central policy advocate and collective voice for all TCUs, recently reported that a second round of sequester-

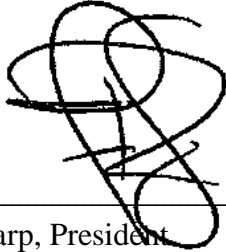
budget cuts as high as 10% will occur in FY 2014, with the likelihood of continued cuts over the next three years; and

WHEREAS, if these sequester-budgets cuts continue as projected, this would severely—and, likely, permanently—undermine the ability of TCUs to carry out the original mission and purpose they were created to do which is to provide access to higher education to American Indian people and tribal communities, and to serve as vehicles for the rebuilding of Indigenous Nations through the teaching of tribal history, language and culture; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that ATNI supports TCUs in their efforts to urge Congress to exempt TCUs from additional sequester budget cuts and to uphold their treaty obligations and federal trust responsibility by fully funding TCUs at the levels authorized by Congress.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2013 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Coeur d'Alene Resort Hotel & Casino, Worley, Idaho on September 16 - 19, 2013, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary