



2014 Winter Convention Ferndale, WA

RESOLUTION #14 - 06

“SUBMIT COMMENTS TO THE FCC ON THE RURAL BROADBAND EXPERIMENTS UNDER THE TECHNOLOGY TRANSITIONS ORDER AND ENCOURAGE MEMBER TRIBES TO SUBMIT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO THE FCC”

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, 21st Century Information and Communications Technology (“ICT”) such as voice, broadband and mobile access are critical to the operation and growth of education, healthcare, public safety, all government services and economic development; and

WHEREAS, communications services on tribal lands and areas are commonly subpar, with incumbent communications carriers and service providers often unresponsive in addressing issues of access, coverage, quality and cost; and

WHEREAS, the FCC Office of Native Affairs and Policy is actively encouraging tribes to consider establishing sovereign control of communications on tribal lands by becoming an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) by leveraging new policy within the Universal Service Fund (“USF”) Transitional Order; and

WHEREAS, the reform of the USF includes billions of dollars which affect tribal lands indirectly through carriers as well as directly in tribal set-asides, preference, bidding credits, capital funding and operational subsidies for Tribal ETCs, providing tribes with a substantial opportunity to impact their own economic and social welfare through communications; and

WHEREAS, the USF Transformational Order issued in October 2011 includes a new funding mechanism known as the Connect America Fund (“CAF”), which is designed to support broadband infrastructure and services in high-cost markets, primarily rural, through an annual fund of \$4.1 Billion; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2014, the FCC released the Technology Transitions Order, which, among other things, adopted targeted experiments to help learn more about the impact of technology transitions on rural America; as part of these experiments, the FCC has invited expressions of interest by March 7, 2014, from entities willing to deploy robust, scalable broadband to eligible high-cost areas with additional CAF funds; and

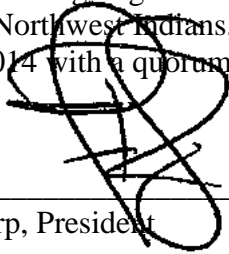
WHEREAS, the FCC states the goal of this experimental program is to gain experience and data on how to ensure universal access as networks transition, and to help inform the policy decisions in various proceedings pending before the FCC; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI shall submit formal comments and/or recommendation(s) regarding the Connect America Fund and the Rural Broadband Experiment for strong consideration by the Federal Communications Commission’s rulemaking(s), for the policy reasons cited above and to further tribal sovereignty; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI shall promote and support efforts by its Member Tribes to submit individual Expressions of Interest in an effort to strengthen the record of comment and recommend tribes put forth projects that will bring broadband and next-generation communications services to Indian Country.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2014 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Silver Reef Hotel Casino Spa, Ferndale, WA on February 17 - 20, 2014 with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary