



## **2017 Mid-Year Convention Portland, OR**

### **RESOLUTION #17 - 21**

#### **“NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGING (NICOA) ELDERS REQUEST ROBUST FUNDING FOR SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP) IN FY 2018”**

#### **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**, NICOA was established in 1976 by Tribal Leaders to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic wellbeing for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Elders; and

**WHEREAS**, NICOA submits to ATNI this resolution passed by the NICOA Board of Directors, during their regular meeting on May 18, 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, as the subcommittee prepares the fiscal year FY 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill, we ask that ATNI ensure the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) continues by robustly funding SCSEP at the U.S. Department of Labor; and

**WHEREAS**, SCSEP is the only federal job training program focused exclusively on helping older Americans return to the workforce and through the program, low-income jobseekers, 55 years old or older, update their skills and contribute to their communities through paid, on-the-job training at schools, hospitals, senior centers, tribal facilities and other non-profit or public facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, each year, 65,000 older workers representing all states and nearly all 3,000 U.S. counties, territories, and tribal communities receive job training in their communities through SCSEP; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition, the program strengthens communities through the extensive service hours performed by SCSEP participants; and

**WHEREAS**, during the most recent program year, SCSEP exceeded its performance goals, including its entered employment and retention rates; and

**WHEREAS**, older Americans often struggle to find jobs when unemployed, taking 40 weeks on average compared to 24 weeks for their younger counterparts and this period of long-term unemployment has disastrous effects on these Americans lives, both financially and emotionally; and

**WHEREAS**, coupled with a looming retirement savings crisis, where a majority of older Americans do not have nearly enough saved for retirement, it is crucial that we allow this program to continue as a lifeline for these workers; and

**WHEREAS**, Public Law 100-175 added a provision to the Older Americans Act requiring the Secretary of Labor to award Title V funds to assist American Indian (AI) and Asian Americans and Pacific Islander (AAPI) older adults in obtaining employment services; it added the requirement that some Title V funds be reserved for national grants or contracts with public or nonprofit national American Indian aging organizations and national public or nonprofit Asian American and Pacific Islander aging organizations; and

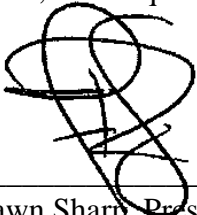
**WHEREAS**, Congress designed SCSEP and the reserved funding to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote employment of SCSEP participants into unsubsidized jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, as required by the Older Americans Act, 75% of SCSEP funds are used for wages for participants, who include veterans, individuals with disabilities, rural residents, American Indian areas, and other most-in-need older Americans and cuts to this program therefore directly harm these economically vulnerable Americans; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI does hereby support our American Indian elders' request to Congress to help to ensure job training for older workers continues by robustly funding the Senior Community Service Employment Program in FY 2018.

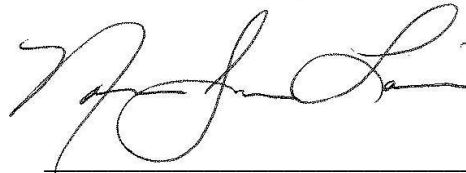
**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2017 Mid-Year Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Double Tree by Hilton - Portland, Oregon, on May 23-26, 2017, with a quorum present.



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Fawn Sharp, President



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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary