



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

### **RESOLUTION #17 - 30**

#### **“OPPOSITION TO FY 2018 BUDGET CUTS TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES”**

#### **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 (AI/AN) 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**, AI/ANs have significant health disparities and have some of the highest rates of poverty nationwide; and

**WHEREAS**, the median income for AI/ANs in the Northwest is \$9,770 lower than the regional average and about 27% of AI/AN in the Northwest live in poverty, compared to 15.5% of the general population; and

**WHEREAS**, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) funding to the Indian Health Services honors the federal government's trust responsibility and treaty obligations to Tribes; and

**WHEREAS**, DHHS includes several federal agencies that fund or provide programs and services to Tribes and AI/AN communities that is part of federal government's trust responsibility and treaty obligations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, among others; and

**WHEREAS**, the DHHS Office of Community Services' Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Community Service Block Grant Program provides critical services to low income AI/ANs that otherwise would not be able to pay their energy or heating bill or access other needed services; and

**WHEREAS**, the President's FY 2018 "America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again" proposes a 17.9% cut to DHHS and proposes elimination of the discretionary programs within the Office of Community Services, including the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Community Service Block Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, AI/ANs rely on funding, programs and services through DHHS and funding cuts will have a severe negative impact on the economic, social, health and well-being of AI/ANs; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal government has a trust responsibility, statutory and treaty obligation to ensure that Tribes and AI/AN communities are fully funded to meet their health care and service needs; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI opposes any FY 2018 budget cuts to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including the Indian Health Service, and elimination of discretionary programs within the Administration of Child and Family Services, Office of Community Services such as LIHEAP and Community Service Block Grant Program, as this is a violation of the federal government's trust responsibility and treaty obligations to Tribes.

### **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