



2017 Annual Convention Spokane, WA

RESOLUTION #17 - 58

“SUPPORTING CHANGE IN THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES RECORD-KEEPING POLICIES PERTAINING TO FOUNDED FINDINGS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT”

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, having an administrative founded finding of child abuse or neglect on one's record automatically disqualifies one from working or volunteering with vulnerable adults or minors; and

WHEREAS, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) findings related to allegations of child abuse and neglect can be automatically made for numerous reasons unrelated to substantiated child abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, current DSHS record-keeping policies maintain records of child abuse and neglect findings indefinitely without a mechanism for expungement or an opportunity to demonstrate rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, these DSHS policies have a discriminatory impact on American Indians and Alaska Natives in Washington State, where Native people are four times more likely than white individuals and three times more likely than individuals in the general population to have these findings on their records; and

WHEREAS, the current DSHS record-keeping system causes American Indian and Alaska Native individuals to experience a lifetime ban from certain employment and volunteer opportunities at a rate that is significantly disproportionate to other groups; and

WHEREAS, the current DSHS record-keeping system creates unnecessary and formidable barriers to tribes realizing their tribal preference in employment, employing tribal members in meaningful jobs, assisting tribal members in remedying past mistakes, and engaging their families as volunteers in their communities; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI acknowledges the harm these record-keeping policies have on tribes and American Indian and Alaska Native individuals; and

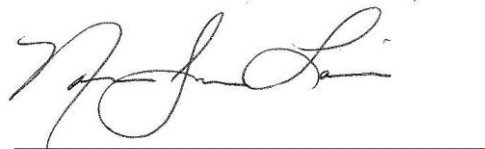
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI supports efforts to change DSHS record-keeping policies to allow for demonstration of rehabilitation or a mechanism for expungement so as to mitigate the disparate discriminatory impact that the policies currently have on American Indians and Alaska Natives, including legal action, legislative advocacy, or government-to-government dialogue.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2017 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Davenport Grand Hotel, Spokane, Washington on September 18-21, 2017 with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary