



## **2017 Annual Convention Spokane, WA**

### **RESOLUTION #17 – 61**

#### **“SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM EXPANSION”**

#### **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 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 ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, AI/ANs have very limited access to health care services and are disproportionately affected by oral and behavioral health disparities and these disparities are directly attributed to the lack of health professionals in Indian communities, which has caused a serious access issue and backlog of many health services for AI/AN people; and

**WHEREAS**, many of our member Tribes have great difficulty and face significant challenges in recruiting health professionals into their communities that results in further challenges in ensuring continuity and comprehensive healthcare for AI/AN people; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) has been in existence since 1964 as a program of the Indian Health Service (IHS); and

**WHEREAS**, the federally authorized Community Health Aide Program Certification Board (CHAPCB) was established and charged with formalizing the process for maintaining the Community Health Aide/ Practitioner training and practice standards and procedures; and

**WHEREAS**, CHAP has been an effective method for diminishing the health disparities of Alaska Natives, and for promoting access to health services for Alaska Natives residing in rural and remote communities; and

**WHEREAS**, CHAP grows providers from within Tribal communities who provide patient-centered quality care that comes from providers that understand the history, culture, and language of their patients; and

**WHEREAS**, CHAP provides routine, preventative, and emergent health care through Community Health Aides, Behavioral Health Aides, and Dental Health Aide Providers; and

**WHEREAS**, CHAP providers provide continuity of care in communities that face recruitment and retention challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, the IHS issued a Dear Tribal Leader Letter on January 4, 2017 to announce that the IHS will begin the process of developing a formal policy and implementation plan to create a national CHAP under the provisions outlined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act as amended at 25 U.S.C. § 1616(d); and

**WHEREAS**, our member Tribes would benefit from expansion of the CHAP outside of Alaska; now

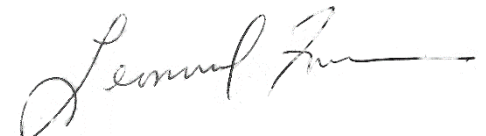
**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI hereby supports expansion of the CHAP in the Portland and California IHS areas and nationally; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI supports the development of regional certification boards with federal baseline standards for consistency of services provided by any CHAP program; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that ATNI supports the establishment of full CHAP pilot projects in the Portland and California IHS Areas.

**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