



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PHX-16-078

### **TITLE: Support for Maintaining Collaborative Efforts with Federal, State, and Private Partners to Combat Human Trafficking in Indian Country**

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**NCAI HEADQUARTERS**  
1516 P Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.466.7767  
202.466.7797 fax  
www.ncai.org

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American 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 the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, human trafficking has been identified in numerous federal and academic publications as a modern day form of slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, while human trafficking effects every community, there is a growing awareness and concern that Native women and girls are particularly vulnerable and are victims of sex trafficking at an alarming rate; and

**WHEREAS**, the NCAI Policy Research Center issued a Tribal Insight Brief in Spring of 2016 entitled "Human & Sex Trafficking: Trends and Responses across Indian Country" that highlights the health and community consequences of trafficking; shares best practices for identifying and supporting victims; and includes sample tribal trafficking codes and programs; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a particular concern about the relationship between the extractive industries and sex trafficking that has been articulated in a white paper that was recently published by the American Indian Law Clinic at the University of Colorado Law School of Law on February 4, 2016 entitled *Responsible Resource Development and Prevention of Sex Trafficking: Safeguarding Native Women and Children on the Fort Berthold Reservation*; and

**WHEREAS**, this white paper articulates the intersection of sex trafficking and oil and gas development on the Bakken Formation largely located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and examines strategies to address this complex issue that includes: corporate engagement of relevant companies; tribal capacity and coalition building; and remedies contained in the Violence Against Women Act of 2014 and calls for all stakeholders involved in the oil development on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation

– federal state, tribal, and public and private companies – to work cooperatively to decisively eliminate sex trafficking of Native women and children; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States federal government has developed a *Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States, 2013-2017* with the plan focusing on providing and coordinating support for victims and aligning all other efforts of the Federal Government to eliminate human trafficking and prevent further victimization...; and

**WHEREAS**, this strategic plan by the Administration has identified that “No single federal agency has the expertise, resources, or authorization to address fully the needs of human trafficking in the United States; however by polling the diverse efforts of the entire Federal Government and working closely with service providers and allied professionals, great progress can be made in 5 years...;” and

**WHEREAS**, tribal nations have taken proactive steps to begin addressing this scourge of violence and exploitation impacting our most vulnerable community members such as the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation having enacted their very own human trafficking code (referred to commonly as “Loren’s Law”).

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians calls on the federal government to ensure greater inclusion of tribal nations in the Federal Strategic Action Plan and continued interagency collaborative efforts along with capacity building for tribal nations; and

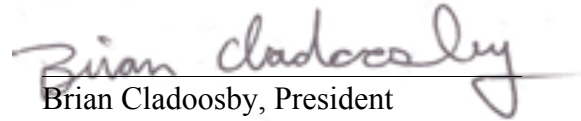
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI calls for continued engagement among federal partners, stakeholders, and tribal communities in order to truly make the vision of comprehensive, transformative, and sustainable victim service response a reality for victims of human trafficking in Indian Country; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI encourages Indian tribes to consider adopting trafficking codes; training law enforcement about trafficking; hosting discussions in their communities to educate tribal citizens, particularly youth, about recognizing the signs of trafficking and accessing available resources; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2016 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Phoenix Convention Center, October 9<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> 2016, with a quorum present.

  
Brian Cladoosby, President

**ATTEST:**

  
Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary