



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PDX-20-034

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TITLE: Calling on Congress, the BIA, and FEMA to Establish and Support On-Reservation Residential Fire Protection Programs and Grants

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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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, more than one million tribal citizens reside on tribal reservations and tribal trust lands, however, they are not currently served by a residential fire department capable of responding to fire emergencies to ensure the protection of lives and property; and

WHEREAS, many tribal children attend schools in buildings that do not have adequate fire emergency coverage; and

WHEREAS, those same tribal citizens attend churches, shop at stores, and receive tribal and federal services in buildings that lack any form of adequate residential fire protection; and

WHEREAS, the lack of residential fire protection endangers tribal citizens' lives, tribal property, and federally funded buildings; and

WHEREAS, the lack of residential fire protection in Indian Country is unacceptable, especially in 2020, wherein many Americans are able to call 911 and have a residential fire department assist them within minutes; and

WHEREAS, to date, the federal government has failed to take any meaningful action to address this dire problem on tribal reservations and this failure is in flagrant violation of the federal trust responsibility.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) calls upon Congress to establish and fully fund, tribal residential fire programs and grants to ensure adequate coverage for all on-reservation residents, buildings, and property; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI calls upon the Bureau of Indian Affairs to develop and implement a tribal residential fire program to ensure adequate coverage for all on-reservation residents, buildings, and property; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NCAI calls upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency to establish a tribal program to provide fire protection grants to those tribal nations that wish to establish, operate, and expand their tribal residential fire departments.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2020 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held Nov 8, 2020 - Nov 13, 2020, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary