



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MKE-17-046

TITLE: Support of Expedited Distribution of Remaining Keepseagle Settlement Funds under the Terms Approved by the D.C. District Court on April 20th, 2016

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Jacqueline Pata
Tlingit

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 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, farming and ranching within Indian country remains a key driver of economic development for the Tribes and individual Indians; and

WHEREAS, after distribution of settlement proceeds to successful claimants \$380 million remained in the settlement fund; and

WHEREAS, counsel for the class, Mrs. Keepseagle, and the Department of Justice were able to reach a mutually agreeable compromise for the distribution of the remaining funds where in \$21,275 dollars would be paid to successful claimants, \$38 million would be distributed to nonprofits chosen by Class Counsel, and \$265 million would be placed into a trust fund for the benefit of Native American farmers and ranchers over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the previously successful claimants, the applying non-profits and the rest of Indian country have been waiting well over a year for the finalization of this approved settlement and distribution of the funds.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports the agreed upon settlement reached by the parties and approved by the D.C. District Court that keeps all of the Keepseagle settlement funds in Indian country and returns none of the dollars to the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI opposes any further action that would prevent farmers and ranchers in Indian country from obtaining the dedicated assistance that the settlement funds would provide, both for the benefit of previously successful individual claimants and to provide the wide variety of programs and services that the trust could provide to farmers and ranchers throughout Indian country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that final approval of the settlement and distribution of the settlement funds should be expedited as quickly as possible for the benefit of Indian country farmers and ranchers; 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 2017 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, WI, Oct 15, 2017 - Oct 20, 2017, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary