



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MSP-15-016

TITLE: Support for Tribal Self-Governance within the Department of Transportation

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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, in 1988 tribal leaders proposed to Congress the establishment of a Tribal Self-Governance Program to allow for greater tribal flexibility and effectiveness in the use of federal funds administered by the Department of Interior (DOI); and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Self-Governance Program authorized tribal governments to assume responsibility for certain DOI government functions and to assert tribal priorities over the use of federal funds pursuant to federal-tribal funding agreements (See 25 U.S.C. §§ 458aa et seq.); and

WHEREAS, the success of the DOI Self-Governance Program led to the expansion of the program to the Department of Health & Human Services Indian Health Service (See 25 U.S.C. §§ 458aaa et seq.); and

WHEREAS, under the Tribal Self-Governance Program, federal programs are more efficiently implemented and expended than when federal officials exercised oversight rather than direct administration; and

WHEREAS, tribes and tribal organizations have come together to develop and promote the "Tribal Transportation Unity Act," a proposal for comprehensive tribal transportation legislation which provides for increased funding for the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) and the Tribal Transit, Tribal Bridge and Tribal Safety Programs, restored funding for Tribal High Priority Projects, the creation of a Tribal Infrastructure Bank, the expansion of Tribal Self-Governance to the U.S. Department of Transportation, along with and various administrative and technical improvements for Tribal transportation; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2015, Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Don Young (R-AK) introduced the “Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Act of 2015” (HR 1068), legislation that adopts an important component of the Tribal Transportation Unity Act that would expand Tribal Self-Governance to programs and divisions within the Department of Transportation (DOT); and

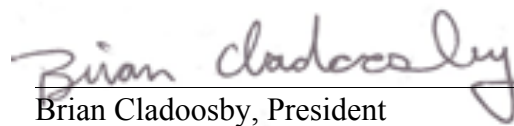
WHEREAS, the extension of self-governance to the DOT is consistent with the congressional goal of streamlining federal regulations, expediting project delivery, and providing greater flexibility at the local level as it would allow tribes to obtain all of their transportation funds under one US DOT agreement that could include not only the Tribal Transportation Program funds, but also transit, safety, Federal-aid and other DOT funds and would thereby streamline Tribal efforts to obtain and administer such funds.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI supports the expansion of the tribal self-governance program within all of U.S. Department of Transportation programs and will work with Members of Congress, Congressional Committees and their staff to incorporate the provision of the extension of self-governance within the next surface transportation legislation or as stand-alone tribal transportation legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER 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 2015 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the St. Paul River Centre, St. Paul, MN, June 28 to July 1, 2015, with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:


Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary