



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

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### RESOLUTION #SD-02-029

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**Title: Encouraging American Indians and Alaska Natives at High Risk for HIV to Get Tested and Get the Results so They Can Know Their Status, Practice Preventive Behaviors, and Seek Appropriate Services**

**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 and their way of life, 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**, infectious disease is far from a new threat to American Indian/Alaska Native populations; and

**WHEREAS**, much of the estimated decline in Indigenous populations can be attributed to the introduction of infectious diseases that were not found in the Americas prior to European contact; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a greater understanding of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and their present impact on our communities, our nation, and the world; and

**WHEREAS**, high rates of sexually transmitted diseases and high rates of drug use indicate that conditions that facilitate the spread of HIV are present in many American Indian and Alaska Native communities; and

**WHEREAS**, what is needed to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic in American Indian and Alaska Native communities is increased usage of HIV testing and counseling services by those at risk for HIV infection, and access to and utilization of HIV prevention, care, and treatment services; and

**WHEREAS**, testing for HIV for those at risk will improve public health agencies' ability to monitor the spread of infection among American Indians and Alaska Natives and most importantly is the key to fighting further spread of the disease; and

**WHEREAS**, it is incumbent upon tribal leaders to deal with issues surrounding HIV/AIDS in a forthright manner that demonstrates compassion and courage for all people.

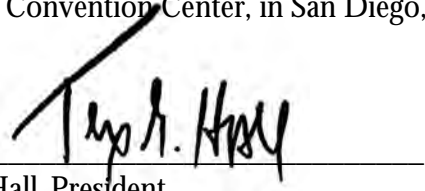
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby urge tribal leaders to promote testing in tribal and urban Indian communities for all those who are at risk for HIV and to dialogue with federal and state public health agencies and officials about how to develop capacity to deliver HIV prevention services in their communities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby urge tribal leaders to work with the National Native American AIDS Prevention Center, National Indian Health Board, National Association of People With AIDS, Indian Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other federal and state public health agencies in encouraging those at high risk for HIV to get tested and to get the results so they can know their status, practice prevention behavior, and seek appropriate services; and

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

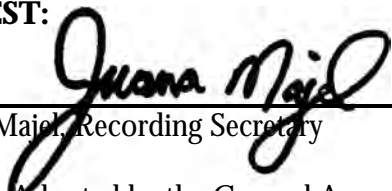
**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2002 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Town and Country Convention Center, in San Diego, California on November 10-15, 2002 with a quorum present.



Tex Hall, President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Juana Majel, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2002 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Town and Country Convention Center, in San Diego, California on November 10-15, 2002.