



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PSP-09-011

TITLE: Support and Expansion of Medical Assistance Programs for Indian Students

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, for many years there has been an acute shortage of American Indian and Alaska Native medical professionals, both on and off of Indian reservations; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that American Indians and Alaska Natives are more likely willing to seek medical care, including preventive medicine, if it is provided by an American Indian or Alaska Native health care professional; and

WHEREAS, the Indians Into Medicine Program (INMED) assists in recruiting and retaining American Indian and Alaska Native students who aspire to be health professionals and work in Indian communities; and

WHEREAS, the INMED program exists at two medical school locations, and assists students to both enter and stay in medical school and become medical doctors; and

WHEREAS, the INMED programs are authorized to receive funds under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act through the Indian Health Service (IHS), in which it is known as the “Indians Into Medicine Program;” and

WHEREAS, with the reduction of funding by Congress, the INMED program nationally has lost significant funding from IHS; and

WHEREAS, INMED has lost the authority to grant scholarships to students entering the medical profession; and

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WHEREAS, the success of the INMED program can be seen through the program at the University of North Dakota and the University of Arizona in partnership with Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., who has assisted more than 400 active doctors and other professionals in the medical field, and it is estimated that over one-half of the active American Indian or Alaska Native medical doctors graduated from the UND INMED program; and

WHEREAS, other programs similar to INMED have also been authorized and have started, including Indians Into Psychology and Indians Into Nursing; and

WHEREAS, costs of medical school are continuing to rise, and financial support for American Indians and Alaska Natives who wish to enter the medical professions is critical to the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby request Congress to appropriate for the INMED program for FY 2010 at least \$1,750,000, an increase of approximately \$1,000,000, and to increase that amount annually by more than \$200,000 for at least 10 years; and

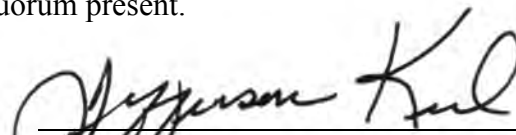
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby request Congress and the IHS to expand or create other programs to assist American Indians and Alaska Natives to enter various medical professions, such as nursing, psychology, pharmacology and dentistry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI supports further amendments to the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to authorize the INMED program to grant scholarships to students entering the medical profession; or, in the alternative, that NCAI requests IHS, if it has the authority, to again provide authority to INMED programs to grant scholarships; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until further amended or withdrawn.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2009 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Palm Springs Convention Center in Palm Springs, California on October 11-16, 2009, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary