



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

National Congress of American Indians  
Resolution #ABQ-03-072

**Title: Request Congress to Prioritize Transportation Funding as One of Indian Country's Top Priorities and Further Requesting Reauthorization of Transportation Funding For Construction and Maintenance of Indian Reservation Roads**

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NCAI HEADQUARTERS  
1301 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
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, 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**, transportation infrastructure is critical to our reservation communities as our roads and bridges provide the most common, and in some cases the only, means of access to our reservations; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribes lag far behind the rest of the country with respect to federal funding for road construction and maintenance; and

**WHEREAS**, Indian Reservation Roads account for two percent of the roads in America but only receive 1/2 of a percent of the federal funding appropriated for roads; and

**WHEREAS**, the tribes contribute federal tax dollars as any other local government entity; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribes pay an equitable share of federal gasoline taxes for which the IRR funds are allocated, and require an equitable share of those distributed funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the construction backlog of our roads is estimated at twenty billion dollars and, at current funding levels, Indian tribes receive less than 1.4% of the need; and

**WHEREAS**, the fatality rate on Indian Reservation Roads is four hundred percent of the national average; and

**WHEREAS**, road systems within our reservations are falling further and further into disrepair; and

**WHEREAS**, Indian tribes rely on their road systems to get their children to school, their sick to clinics and hospitals, to provide services to our elderly and commerce; and

**WHEREAS**, that the NCAI membership finds that NCAI needs to send a message to Congress to prioritize transportation funding as one of Indian Country’s top priorities and request reauthorization of monies for or Indian Reservation Roads system.

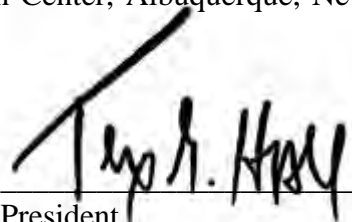
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby request that Congress prioritize transportation funding as on of Indian Country’s top priorities and hereby further requests that reauthorize funding for Indian Reservation Roads at levels that will allow Tribes to address the construction needs of these roads; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Congress authorize a demonstration program that would extend Indian Self-Determination contracting to the Federal Highway Administration so that Tribes that desire to administer their own road program could work directly with the Federal Highway Administration; and

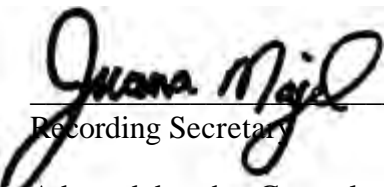
**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on November 21, 2003 with a quorum present.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from November 17-21, 2003.