



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SAC-06-049

TITLE: Request to Move the Land Upon Which the Chemawa Indian School is Located into Trust

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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, the Chemawa Indian School is the oldest off-reservation boarding school still operating in the United States, having been established in Forest Grove, Oregon in 1880 and having moved to Salem, Oregon in 1885; and

WHEREAS, in the early years, Native American and Alaska Native children were often removed from their homes and villages and placed in off-reservation boarding schools by officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

WHEREAS, knowledge of the Tribal affiliation and history of all children who attended those schools is a significant cultural and historical resource and many families and Tribes are currently working to discover and reconstruct the true histories of their ancestors; and

WHEREAS, our tribal ancestors as students and staff of Chemawa Indian School thought it so important that they gave their own money to buy land stating: "We only want to find a place where we can have land of our [own], we want this school, land, buildings, everything, to belong to the Indians;" and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the Department of the Interior is responsible for maintaining records of Indian children that attended the off-reservation boarding schools established by the United States Government; and the Bureau of Indian Affairs is also responsible for maintaining the grounds of Chemawa Indian School yet minimal funds have been made available for restoration or maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Indian Education Program (OIEP) is located within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior and is responsible for line direction and management of all BIA education functions including the formation of policies and procedures, supervision of all program activities under the office's jurisdiction and the approval of funds appropriated for the BIA Indian education functions; and

WHEREAS, the mission of OIEP at 25 CFR 32 states that the Bureau of Indian Affairs, OIEP is to provide quality educational opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with the Tribe's needs for cultural and economic well-being in cultural and governmental entities; and

WHEREAS, the United States' policy of Section 3 of PL 93-638, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, states: "...Congress declares that a major goal of the United States is to provide the quantity and quality of educational services and opportunities, which will permit Indian children to complete and excel in the life areas of their choice;" and

WHEREAS, Title VII of the No-Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ("Act"), PL 107-110, was enacted to support the efforts of local educational agencies, Indian Tribes and organizations, postsecondary institutions, and other entities to meet the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native students, so that such students are expected to meet. Title VII of the Act confirms the policy of the United States to fulfill the Federal Government's unique and continuing trust relationship with and responsibility to the Indian people for the education of Indian children.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby request the Bureau of Indian Affairs to move the land upon which the Chemawa Indian School is located into trust for the tribes of the Northwest based upon a plan to be approved by the tribes of ATNI, to improve educational services to Indian children, preserve the integrity of the two Chemawa cemeteries, and to protect a significant cultural and historical resource; 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 2006 63rd Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Sacramento Convention Center in Sacramento, California on October 1-6, 2006, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary