



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution # MOH-17-030

TITLE: National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA) Elders Request Robust Funding for Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) In FY 2018

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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, NICOA was established in 1976 by Tribal Leaders to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic wellbeing for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Elders; and

WHEREAS, SCSEP is the only federal job training program focused exclusively on helping older Americans return to the workforce and through the program, low-income jobseekers, 55 years old or older, update their skills and contribute to their communities through paid, on-the-job training at schools, hospitals, senior centers, tribal facilities and other non-profit or public facilities; and

WHEREAS, each year, 65,000 older workers representing all states and nearly all 3,000 U.S. counties, territories, and tribal communities receive job training in their communities through SCSEP; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the program strengthens communities through the extensive service hours performed by SCSEP participants; and

WHEREAS, during the most recent program year, SCSEP exceeded its performance goals, including its entered employment and retention rates; and

WHEREAS, older Americans often struggle to find jobs when unemployed, taking 40 weeks on average compared to 24 weeks for their younger counterparts and this period of long-term unemployment has disastrous effects on these Americans lives, both financially and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, coupled with a looming retirement savings crisis, where a majority of older Americans do not have nearly enough saved for retirement, it is crucial that we allow this program to continue as a lifeline for these workers; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 100-175 added a provision to the Older Americans Act requiring the Secretary of Labor to award Title V funds to assist American Indian (AI) and Asian Americans and Pacific Islander (AAPI) older adults in obtaining employment services; it added the requirement that some Title V funds be reserved for national grants or contracts with public or nonprofit national American Indian aging organizations and national public or nonprofit Asian American and Pacific Islander aging organizations; and

WHEREAS, Congress designed SCSEP and the reserved funding to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote employment of SCSEP participants into unsubsidized jobs; and

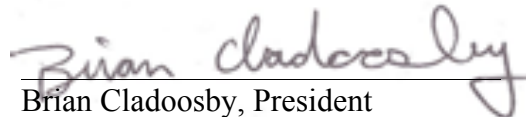
WHEREAS, as required by the Older Americans Act, 75% of SCSEP funds are used for wages for participants, who include veterans, individuals with disabilities, rural residents, American Indian areas, and other most-in-need older Americans and cuts to this program therefore directly harm these economically vulnerable Americans.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) does hereby request Congress to fully support job training programs for American Indian elder workers and support American Indian programs that serve elder needs; 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 2017 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Mohegan Sun Convention Center, June 12 to June 15, 2017, with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:


Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary