



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MSP-15-047

### TITLE: Standing in Support of our Two Spirit Relatives in our Communities and Nations

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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**, prior to contact with settlers, many tribal nations across the country and continent had long and respected histories of respect and inclusion of those in their communities who might now be described as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, third and fourth gender or two spirit; and

**WHEREAS**, all citizens and members of our member tribes and nations are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

**WHEREAS**, many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, third and fourth gender or two spirit ancestors and citizens of our tribes and nations have been targets of homophobia and transphobia, carrying with it extremely harmful and even lethal effects; these disparities lead to cumulative outcomes that affect every area of life; and

**WHEREAS**, our member tribes and nations are unwaveringly committed to all causes that strengthen the health of our tribal citizens, families, communities, and nations; and

**WHEREAS**, two spirit youth experience increased levels of bullying, resulting in higher rates of truancy, incarceration, elevated levels of self harm, attempted suicide, and suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, 15 to 43 percent of two spirit adults experience some form of harassment in the workplace, 65 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native transgender and gender nonconforming people were harassed, 14 percent were physically assaulted, and 10 percent were sexually assaulted at work; and

**WHEREAS**, the principle of non-discrimination is embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, in Articles 2, 7, and 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Articles 2, 3, 14, 25 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People; and

**WHEREAS**, many of our member tribes have taken steps to prohibit discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in our laws and to address such discriminations; and

**WHEREAS**, the principles of sovereignty and self-determination dictate that our member tribes have full and authority over issues that impact the health, welfare, preservation of culture, and future for our tribal citizens.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI hereby declares its support of the full equality of all tribal persons, including two spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender tribal citizens, in the interest of furthering the cause of human rights and the principle of non-discrimination for all our citizens wherever they reside; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, we are committed to promoting the principle of non-discrimination and to supporting and strengthening individuals, families, communities and our member nations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NCAI supports its member tribes to pursue governmental policy changes such as those outlined in the *Tribal Equity Toolkit: Tribal Resolutions and Codes for Two Spirit and LGBT Justice*; and

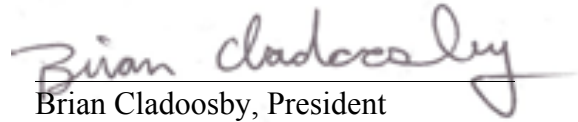
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, efforts by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Centers Two Spirit Learning Community should be expanded and considered best practice in providing culturally responsive services to our two spirit relatives; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, because tribal nations, two spirit equality, and decolonization are inextricably linked, one cannot be truly achieved without the other; 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 by the General Assembly at the 2015 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the St. Paul River Centre, St. Paul, MN, June 28 to July 1, 2015, with a quorum present.

  
Brian Cladoosby, President**ATTEST:**  
Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary