



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MKE-17-011

TITLE: Reclassification of IHS Budget to Mandatory Spending Program

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Jacqueline Pata
Tlingit

NCAI HEADQUARTERS
1516 P Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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 US government has a trust responsibility to tribes that establishes a legal obligation to provide economic and social programs necessary to raise the standard of living and well-being of the Indian people to a level comparable to non-Indian society; and

WHEREAS, as stated in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, “Federal health services to maintain and improve the health of the Indians are consonant with and required by the Federal Government’s historical and unique legal relationship with, and resulting responsibility to, the American Indian people...to assure the highest possible health status for Indians...and to provide all resources necessary to effect that policy;” and

WHEREAS, IHS have fallen under the category of discretionary spending and as a consequence have been subject to the willingness of Congress and the president to provide appropriate funding; and

WHEREAS, IHS have been chronically underfunded and are funded at levels dramatically lower than those of other government health care programs.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will advocate for existing AI/AN health care budgets to be classified as mandatory spending programs with a form of automatic annual adjustment to account for inflation and increased eligibility at similar levels to other federal health care programs; 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 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, WI, Oct 15, 2017 - Oct 20, 2017, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary