



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #TUL-05-055

TITLE: Support for an Area Fund Distribution to Fund Area Health Facilities Construction Projects

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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 FY 2000 Interior Appropriations Act directed the Indian Health Service (IHS) to work closely with Tribes to make needed changes to the Health Facilities Construction Priority System (HFCPS) so that the revised system addresses the health facilities construction needs of all American Indian and Alaska Native communities; and

WHEREAS, in June 2004 the IHS Director distributed a draft of the revised HFCPS for Tribal comment in which the Agency received over 1,200 comments in 80 different letters conveying Tribal concerns and objections with the proposed HFCPS; and

WHEREAS, the Facilities Advisory Appropriation Board (FAAB) established a Technical Work Group (TWG) to gather information on the specific issues expressed in the Tribal comments and to make recommendations back to the FAAB on how to address or incorporate the Tribal concerns and recommendations into the new HFCPS; and

WHEREAS, one of the recommendations developed by the TWG and supported by the FAAB is the development of an Area Fund Distribution that proposes to take 20%, or no less than \$20 million, of the annual health facilities construction budget and provide it to the Area Offices to fund high priority construction projects in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Area Fund Distribution recommendation was unanimously and strongly supported by all twelve of the Area Tribal representatives of the FAAB; and

WHEREAS, the IHS Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEHE) has indicated to the FAAB and its TWG that the Area Fund Distribution proposal will require new authorizing legislation in order to implement the recommendation, however the FAAB believes that the Agency currently has the authority to implement the proposal by incorporating it into the HFCPS document; and

WHEREAS, the FAAB and TWG have also recommended that the IHS pursue legislation that would explicitly authorize the Agency to carry out the proposed Area Fund Distribution recommendation.

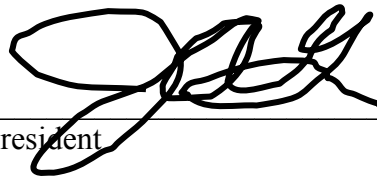
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby strongly support the proposed Area Fund Distribution and encourage the IHS Director to adopt the recommendation by incorporating it into the new Health Facility Construction Priority System; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby urge the National Steering Committee to include language in the pending bills to reauthorize the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (S. 1057) that will provide the IHS with the explicit authority to carry out the Area Fund Distribution proposal; and

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

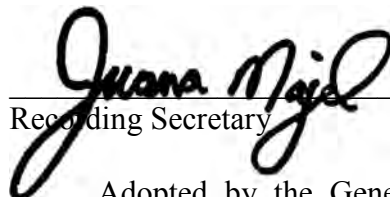
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2005 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the 62nd Annual Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma on November 4, 2005 with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2005 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians held from October 30, 2005 to November 4, 2005 at the Convention Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.