



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #ABQ-03-128

Title: Support for Senate Bill Authorizing Presentation of Gold Medals on Behalf of Congress to Native American Indian Code Talkers During Foreign Conflicts

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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, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the virtue of the authority vested in the President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, proclaimed November 2002 as National American Indian Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, in this proclamation the President was grateful to the Navajo "Dine" Code Talkers for the use of their native tongue in the relaying of messages that helped our nation and our allies secure victory; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress recognized these heroes by authorizing the President to award them Congressional Gold Medals for their participation in every assault the United States Marines conducted in the Pacific from 1942-1945; and

WHEREAS, the NCAI is grateful to the President and the United States of Congress for this belated recognition and honoring through ceremony to the Navajo "Dine" Code Talkers; and

WHEREAS, there were numerous other Code Talkers from various other American Indian nations, including, but not limited to the Sioux (Dakota, Lakota, Nakota), Comanche, Apache, Hopi, Choctaw, Oneida, all of whom played significant roles in significant roles in supporting the United States and its allies in achieving victory; and

WHEREAS, the American Indian Code Talkers were considered such a valuable national combat resource that they faced hazards far beyond what most troops faced, in that in many instances they could not be allowed to be taken alive as prisoners by the enemy, a fact known to the Code Talkers; and

WHEREAS, for the 108th Congress, 1st Session, a Senate Bill, S. 540 has been introduced, read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs to: “Authorize the presentation of gold medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th century in recognition of those Native Americans to the United States; and

WHEREAS, S.540 Sec 402, (b)(2) States “Determination- The Secretary of Defense shall:

- A) determine eligibility under paragraph (1); and
- B) no later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this act, establish a list of names of individuals eligible to receive a medal under paragraph (1)”;

and

WHEREAS, the extensive research involved combined with the relatively short time span, especially in light of loss of military records from the fire at the Saint Louis depository, has a high potential of unknowingly and unwittingly overlooking qualified recipients of the proposed award; and

WHEREAS, S.540 has been in committee since March 5, 2003, and it is now the end of November, 2003; and

WHEREAS, surviving proposed recipients are all elders whose ranks are rapidly diminishing.

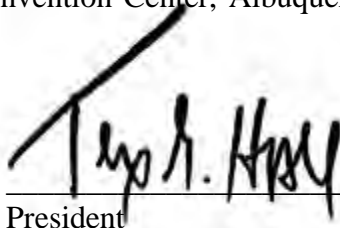
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby strongly supports the rapid enactment of S.540 by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, and its rapid signature by the President of the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an additional paragraph be added to S.540 Sec 402, (b)(2) to read: “(C) on an annual basis, for five years after enactment, add to the established list those additional names of individuals determined to be eligible for recognition and award under paragraph (1)”;

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

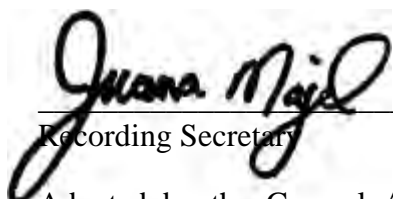
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 60th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on November 21, 2003 with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during 60th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from November 17-21, 2003.