



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

July 14, 2015

The Honorable Donald Young, Chairman
The Honorable Raul Ruiz, Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Committee
Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs
1337 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- PRESIDENT Brian Cladoosby Swinomish Tribe
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT Randy Noka Narragansett Tribe
RECORDING SECRETARY Aaron Payment Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan
TREASURER Arlan Melendez Reno Sparks Indian Colony

REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS

- ALASKA Jerry Isaac Native Village of Tanacross
EASTERN OKLAHOMA S. Joe Crittenden Cherokee Nation
GREAT PLAINS Leander McDonald Spirit Lake Nation
MIDWEST Roger Rader Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
NORTHEAST Lance Gumbs Shinnecock Indian Nation
NORTHWEST Fawn Sharp Quinault Indian Nation
PACIFIC Rosemary Morillo Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
ROCKY MOUNTAIN Ivan Posey Shoshone Tribe
SOUTHEAST Ron Richardson Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe
SOUTHERN PLAINS Stephen Smith Kiowa Tribe
SOUTHWEST Manuel Heart Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
WESTERN Len George Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Jacqueline Johnson Pata Tlingit

NCAI HEADQUARTERS
1516 P Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
202.466.7767
202.466.7797 fax
www.ncai.org

RE: NCAI SUPPORTS THE ALYCE SPOTTED BEAR AND WALTER SOBOLEFF COMMISSION ON NATIVE CHILDREN LEGISLATION & URGES SWIFT ACTION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Dear Chairman Young & Ranking Member Ruiz:

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest, and most representative organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments, I urge your committee to support the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children (S. 246). The legislation recently passed the Senate with strong bi-partisan support and support from our tribal nations. NCAI asks you to continue your demonstration of support for Native youth by passing S. 246 out of your subcommittee.

The Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children will create a platform for a national dialogue on the state of Native youth in Indian Country. The Commission will bring together experts in the areas of juvenile justice, social work, education, and mental and physical health to identify the complex challenges facing Native children throughout the country through a deep analysis of a variety of issues including high rates of poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse, and the shortage of economic opportunities. This Commission's work will begin focusing on the holistic wellbeing of Native youth that is greatly needed.

NCAI's membership strongly supports S. 246 and urges your subcommittee to take swift action on ensuring this bipartisan bill passes the House of Representatives and arrives on the president's desk for enactment. If you should have any questions, please contact Denise Desiderio, NCAI Policy Director, at 202-466-7767 or ddesiderio@ncai.org.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Johnson Pata

Jacqueline Pata
Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians