



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians  
Resolution # REN-13-006

**TITLE: Protect Alaska Native Women**

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**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, 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**, all tribal sovereign nations honor, respect, and hold sacred our Native women; retain our inherent right to regulate domestic relations for our women, children, and families; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized tribes; there are over 200 rural Alaska Native villages in which federally recognized Indian tribes operate, and only 78 of those are served by local trained State law enforcement; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska Native villages suffer disproportionately from crimes and civil disturbances rooted in alcohol abuse, illicit drug use, suicide, and domestic violence; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska Native women suffer the highest rate of forcible sexual assault in the United States, an Alaska Native woman is sexually assaulted every 18 hours, and according to the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, 1 in 2 Alaska Native women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime; and

**WHEREAS**, geographical remoteness, extreme weather, and the lack of transportation infrastructure present challenges responding to crime in Alaska Native villages and providing access to state judicial systems in a timely manner; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska Native women in urban areas are also threatened by physical and sexual violence; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Alaska continues to withdraw law enforcement resources from rural Alaska and Alaska Native women are increasingly at risk; and

**WHEREAS**, federally recognized Indian tribes that operate within Alaska Native villages must be able to carry out local, culturally relevant solutions to effectively address the lack of law enforcement in villages and the lack of access to swift State court proceedings;

**WHEREAS**, NCAI urged Congress to include protections for Alaska Native victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in any final bill reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act (see NCAI Resolution # SAC-12-038); and

**WHEREAS**, the final version of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 contained a “Special Rule for the State of Alaska” in Section 910 which thereby applied sections 904 and 905 of VAWA only to the Metlakatla Indian Community, Annette Island Reserve; and

**WHEREAS**, NCAI applauds the historic victories obtained for some tribes in VAWA 2013 but also recognizes that the safety of Alaska Native women is still at risk; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act has been introduced in the 111<sup>th</sup> and 112<sup>th</sup> Congresses (S. 3740 and S. 1192 respectively) by Alaska Senator Mark Begich.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NCAI supports the development of legislation that will:

- 1) Restore Alaska Native village lands as “Indian country” with Alaska tribal governments having the same authority to address the needs of their peoples as the tribes in the lower 48; and
- 2) At a minimum, restore the authority of Alaska tribes to address domestic violence, dating violence and sexual assault within village lands, as well as related problems of alcohol and drug abuse; and
- 3) Provide separate funding to Alaska tribal governments for necessary law enforcement in rural villages; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI supports the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act and supports further amendments to expand the pilot project of VAWA 2013 to include all tribes in Alaska.

**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 2013 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Atlantis Casino from June 24 - 27, 2013 in Reno, Nevada with a quorum present.

  
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President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Recording Secretary