



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SD-15-005

TITLE: Requesting the Re-Naming of Fort Custer Training Center Located in the State of Michigan

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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 counties of Kalamazoo and Calhoun in Michigan are home to the Fort Custer Training Center, which is owned by the United States government and operated by the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Custer Training Center (originally known as “Camp Custer”) was established in 1917 for military training during World War I and named after General George Armstrong Custer, whose reputation and history as an officer in the United States Army’s 7th Cavalry involved many military campaigns against tribes; and

WHEREAS, General Custer is also known to have targeted Indian women and children, who were captured to be used as “human shields” in furtherance of his units campaigns against Native American tribes in the West, a tactic that is universally condemned; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Defense defers to the decision of the service branch or agency having administrative control over military installations concerning matters such as the re-naming of those installations; and

WHEREAS, despite General Custer’s roots in the State of Michigan, it is known that the actions and military tactics used by General George Armstrong Custer are undeserving of honor, and the military training center should be re-named

WHEREAS, General Custer is undeserving of any honor or recognition.

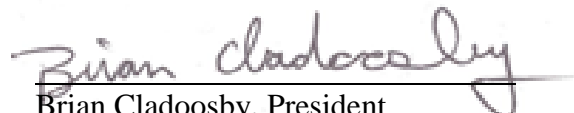
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports the requests of tribal governments to the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the United States Department of Defense to remove the name of George Armstrong Custer from the military training center and recreational lands located in Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the re-naming of that facility should take place in consultation with interested parties, including Indian tribal governments in the State of Michigan; 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 by the General Assembly at the 2015 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Town and Country Resort, San Diego, CA, October 18-23, 2015, with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:


Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary