

National Congress of American Indians 2014 Executive Council Winter Session

Thank you for attending the 2014 NCAI Executive Council Winter Session! It was a great event and we are happy to share this short summary of our time together. Feel free to share with your friends and neighbors!

Working Together Towards Our Common Goals

The Executive Council Winter Session is a working conference where members convene for in-depth conversations about policy, legislation, and the future of Indian Country. Joining NCAI membership at the 2014 session were 24 representatives from Congress and the Administration who all spoke of the need to strengthen the nation-to-nation relationship and made commitments to work closely with tribal leaders in the months and years ahead.



One issue was brought up again and again by tribal leaders, invited guests, and NCAI speakers: the need for a clean, legislative fix to the Supreme Court's decision in the *Carcieri* case. During the conference, the Solicitor of the [Department of the Interior issued an opinion on *Carcieri*](#), stating that the term "under federal jurisdiction" is ambiguous and undefined, therefore the DOI has the authority to determine which tribes do and do not fall under the statute and will proceed to make decisions about trust agreements accordingly. This is an important step in addressing the widespread and damaging effects of *Carcieri*, but tribes need a permanent and legislative solution. All tribes must be treated equally but as long as *Carcieri* is upheld, that is not possible. NCAI staff and members continue to be dedicated to the fight for a clean fix.

Many topics were addressed during the conference in both the General Assembly and during standing room-only panels. A few highlights...

- The need for tribes to benefit from the Affordable Care Act and enroll at [HealthCare.gov](#) or by calling 1-800-318-2596.
 - Vice President Joe Biden & HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius joined Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, Director of the Indian Health Service, on a call with tribal leaders to discuss the importance of insurance and to answer questions from NCAI members about the website and enrollment.



- The implementation of the Violence Against Women Act and continued need to strive for equal protection for **all** Native women.
 - The Task Force on the Violence Against Women Act met in a packed room to discuss implementation, international concerns, and funding issues.
- The importance of elevating our Native Youth – encouraging their dreams, investing in their goals, and providing support when they struggle.
 - Other Native Youth organizations joined us at the conference to collaborate about future projects.



Youth posing with posters describing a challenge facing Indian Country and their solutions.

In order to work towards a stronger nation-to-nation relationship between tribal governments and the federal government, federal officials must be kept informed of the concerns of Indian Country and must, in return, keep tribal leaders informed about what is happening in their agencies. To that end, several Consultation and Listening Sessions were held, including those covering:

- BIA & IHS Contract Support Costs
- 477 Data Forms
- BIA ICWA Guidelines for State Courts
- Labor Force Report
- Proposed Statement of Principles for the U.S. Department of Justice
- Federal Communications Commission
- Trust Commission Report
- Indian Education

For more information on sessions and speakers, see the [Conference Agenda](#).

Resolutions that are urgent in nature or time-sensitive may be considered at Winter Session by the Executive Board.

Nine resolutions were presented before the Executive Board at the 2014 Winter Session. Some examples of those that passed include resolutions...

- supporting the reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act;
- urging an amendment to VAWA to include Alaska Native women;
- establishing the Tribal Trust Modernization Task Force; and
- urging full payment of contract support costs and speedier settlement process.



Celebrating Our Culture & Our Friends

The Capitol Hill reception at the Smithsonian's [National Museum of the American Indian](#) was a great success. It is so special that the museum is opened just for NCAI to explore while enjoying delicious food and the company of other members.



This year we were joined by Senator Elizabeth Warren, who spent the entire reception speaking with tribal leaders, posing for pictures, and answering questions.

NCAI gathered to celebrate our champions at a banquet honoring the 2014 Indian Country Leadership Award Winners:

- NMAI Director Kevin Gover
- Senator Mike Crapo
- Professor James Anaya
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- Chairman Earl Barbry, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe *In Memoriam*
- Juanita Ahtone, Kiowa Tribe

Miss Juanita stole the show and reminded us all of the importance of community, family, and encouragement.



Don't Miss The Next NCAI Conference!

2014 Mid-Year Conference

“Claiming Our Rights & Strengthening Our Governance”

June 8-11, 2014

Anchorage, AK

Register and get all the information at www.ncai.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

