

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS**

RESOLUTION #SPO-01-025

Title: BIA Economic/Business Development Training and Technical Assistance Funding

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, historically, Indian Tribes and Nations have been recognized as separate political and economic entities; which has often lead to great economic and social inequities for Tribes and their members; and

WHEREAS, the lack of economic development has lead to consistent high rates of unemployment and great hardship for Indian people on many reservations, with unemployment rates regularly exceeding 35% of all employable adults, many times the national average; and

WHEREAS, the passage of welfare reform legislation creates additional urgent incentives for the continued creation of jobs and highlights the need foOr sustainable economic development on Indian reservations, since as welfare programs are ended, Indian people on reservations will need quality employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, various programs have been enacted, such as the BIA economic development office, which allows businesses owned by Indian tribes and Indian individuals to take advantage of opportunities for business development; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress passed legislation, creating the Indian Finance Act which included all Indian reservations, providing incentives for business on reservations and providing business opportunities for Indian and Tribal owned business; and

WHEREAS, the legislation that created the Indian Finance Act to fund past BIA economic development has been removed or decreased from the BIA budget.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby support this resolution and urges the President of the United States to include in his FY 2003 budget the following program funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Economic Development, for the purposes of providing specific financial assistance for these programs: Increase funding of the BIA loan guaranty and insurance program by \$70 million; Increase BIA Indian Business Assistance program by \$20 million for funding of business plans, feasibilities, marketing, training and technical assistance; Increase Indian business grant program by \$10 million; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby support this resolution to urge and request that the US Congress and the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Committees appropriate no less than \$100 million in the FY 2003 Budget for the purposes outlined above; 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 at the 58th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001 with a quorum present.

Tex Hall, President

ATTEST:

Colleen Cawston, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 58th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001.