

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS**

RESOLUTION #SPO-01-093

Title: Protection of Inherent Sovereignty

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 ability of a people to govern its affairs in accordance with its own tradition, laws, and customs is an inherent attribute of sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives have from time immemorial governed themselves and their affairs in accordance with their ancient traditions, laws, and customs reflecting their unique cultural and spiritual heritage; and

WHEREAS, past policies of the United States have caused many American Indian and Alaska Native nations to alter their traditional forms of government in a manner that disregarded their cultural heritages and their moral and spiritual values, and that threatened the integrity of their sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, there exist American Indian and Alaska Native Nations who now seek to dispense with these imposed, non-traditional forms of government and instead devise and implement native constitutions that complement and preserve their indigenous traditions, laws, and customs and thereby enhance their political and cultural sovereignty.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby recognize that the right to self-determination of American Indian and Alaska Native Nations is a cultural as well as political right; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as part of its efforts to support, promote and protect the inherent sovereignty of American Indian and Alaska Native Nations, the NCAI does hereby offer its support for American Indian and Alaska Native Nations that seek to adopt tribal constitutions that complement and embody traditional values and customs as passed down within those nations from generation to generation from time immemorial; 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.