

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS**

RESOLUTION #SPO-01-096

Title: A Resolution Supporting Increased Funding Levels for the Indian Health Service

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 states purpose of the organization is to promote advocacy for policy and legislative changes that will favorably impact our primary goals of providing safe, decent and affordable housing for Indian people in a manner recognizing the unique government-to-government relationship of tribes and the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the published mission of the Indian Health Service is to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indian and Alaska Native so the highest level; and their published goal is to assure that comprehensive, culturally acceptable personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people; and

WHEREAS, many Indian tribes are experiencing a lack of adequate funding for infrastructure construction relating to new housing development and improvement of existing systems; and

WHEREAS, since the implementation of the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), infrastructure development funds are severely inadequate and were not factored into the Indian Housing Block Grant funding formula and has caused an undue accounting and management burden on the Indian Health Service to determine the exact amount of infrastructure funds for new housing development projects and determine the ability to participate in HUD funded housing projects; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress reaffirmed that the Indian Health Service (IHS) has the primary responsibility and authority to provide necessary sanitation facilities and services to tribal homes and communities under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, P.L. 94-437 as amended, including the administration of a Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) annual report that documents water, wastewater and solid waste needs for existing housing units and communities with a nationwide need of \$1.7 billion but was funded for FY 2002 at \$93 million (split roughly in half between services for SDS and new homes, not including HUD-funded units; and

WHEREAS, since 1982, the Indian Health Service has been precluded from funding the construction of sanitation facilities to serve home funded by HUD where Congress cited the following language in appropriations bill: "Sanitation funds should not be used to provide sanitation facilities for new homes funded by the housing programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The HUD should provide any needed funds to the IHS for that purposes;" and

WHEREAS, historically, the Department of Housing and Urban Development transferred funds to the Indian Health Services to serve homes funded under the HUD-funded housing program, under a coordination project development process outlined in an interagency agreement; and, prior to the implementation of NAHASDA, approximately \$25 million per year was transferred.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby request that the United States Congress amend appropriation language to allow the Indian Health Service to fund water and wastewater systems for new HUD funded construction housing projects.

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.