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THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS

RESOLUTION #SD-02-067

Title: "National Council on Disability (NCD) Study Regarding People with Disabilities on Tribal Lands"

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 and their way of life, 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, American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest rate of disability than any other racial or ethnic group in the United States, with 22% of the total American Indian / Alaska Native population experiencing some type of disability; and

WHEREAS, significant barriers exist for American Indians and Alaska Natives with disabilities within their own tribal communities, including fragmented services; limited coordination or collaboration among providers; limited enforcement or understanding of federal disability laws; limited budgets for services; inaccessible buildings and facilities; and limited outreach to or understanding of people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the National Council on Disability (NCD) funded a national study, "People with Disabilities on Tribal Lands: Education, Health Care, Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living" which is funded from June 1, 2002 until January 15, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the three objectives of this NCD study are: (1) to identify barriers to effective federal-tribal government relationships; and (2) to develop recommendations for improvements in government-to-government relationships; and (3) to develop a Tool Kit for tribal communities; and

WHEREAS, this study has been guided by American Indian and Alaska Native people with disabilities and tribal leaders serving on a "Technical Expert Panel" (TEP) to the NCD contractor; and

WHEREAS, the draft findings and recommendation of the study, in addition to a draft prototype of the Tool Kit have been shared with participants of the National Congress of American Indians convention of 2002, including the Subcommittee on Disabilities and the Subcommittee on Health; and

WHEREAS, the products of this NCD study, including the Recommendations and Tool Kit offer the potential for expanded protections and services for American Indian and Alaska Native people with disabilities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby call upon the National Council on Disability to support the production and dissemination of the Tool Kit developed through this study, so that every tribe in the U.S. will be provided not less than two (2) copies of the Tool Kit; and each of the fifty states will be provided at least one (1) copy of the Tool Kit; and

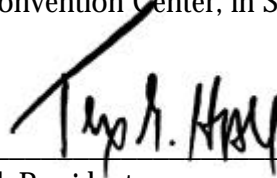
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI calls upon federal agencies, including the Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Council of Disability, the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Justice, Social Security Administration and the Department of Labor to consider the findings and recommendations from this study and to work in consultation with American Indian and Alaska Native tribes to move forward in the implementation of these recommendations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby call upon the U.S. Congress through the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the House Resources Committee to hold hearings on the issues and needs of American Indian and Alaska Native people with disabilities; 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 2002 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Town and Country Convention Center, in San Diego, California on November 10-15, 2002 with a quorum present.



Tex Hall, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2002 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Town and Country Convention Center, in San Diego, California on November 10-15, 2002.