



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

RESOLUTION #MSH-01-037

Title: Trust Land Acquisitions

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 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, largest, and most representative national American Indian and Alaska Native tribal government organization; and

WHEREAS, the General Allotment Act of 1887 caused a two-thirds reduction in tribal land holdings of over 90 million acres and the transfer of the most valuable tribal lands out of tribal ownership; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934 in order to halt the loss of tribal lands and in Section 5 to provide a mechanism for restoration of tribal lands; and

WHEREAS, Section 5 of the IRA specifically authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire lands in trust for tribes and is broad legislation designed to implement the fundamental principle that all tribes in all circumstances need a tribal homeland that is adequate to support and continue their traditional way of life, and to support economic activity and self-determination; and

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WHEREAS, since 1934 the Department of Interior has restored fewer than 8 million acres to tribes; and

WHEREAS, tribes, in an effort to restore their homelands, have purchased these alienated lands located within their reservation boundaries, and have applied to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to restore the land to trust status; and

WHEREAS, there is a backlog of these Land Into Trust applications, some of which have applied for restoration to trust status over a decade ago.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby urge the Federal Government to implement any available measures to remedy the backlog of Land Into Trust Applications submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs which would allow the first Americans of this great nation to perpetuate their traditions and enhance their self-sufficiency.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2001 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket, Connecticut on May 13-16, 2001, with a quorum present.



Susan Masten, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majet, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2001 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held in Mashantucket, Connecticut on May 13-16, 2001.