



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

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RESOLUTION #MSH-01-057

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 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, 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, historically, the great potential of Indian reservations for further economic development has not been fully realized; 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 for sustainable economic development on Indian reservations, since as welfare programs are ended, Indian people on the reservations will need quality employment opportunities; and

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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 training and technical assistance has been removed from the BIA budget.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby support this resolution and urges the President of the United States to include in his FY 2002 budget no less than \$20 million in funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Economic Development, for the purposes of providing specific training and technical assistance for the development and expansion of reservation businesses; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby support this resolution to urge and request that the U.S. Congress and the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Committees appropriate no less than \$20 million in the FY 2002 Budget for the purposes outlined above.

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 Majel, 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.