



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #DEN-07-014

### TITLE: Support of Native Public Media's Position to Include Native Americans in U.S. Media and Telecommunications Reform

**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**, Native Public Media promotes healthy, engaged, independent Native communities by strengthening and expanding Native American media capacity and by empowering a strong, proud Native American voice; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Public Media represents the media interests of Native America including the thirty-three Native owned public radio stations and the satellite system *Native Voice One* serving Indian Country through the adoption of policies that improve the ability of Native people to create our own stories, vital news, and entertainment via radio stations and other emerging technologies; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans should be heard on issues of localism and provided an opportunity to participate in a thoughtful and deliberate rulemaking in order to forward comprehensive solutions that will increase women and Native American ownership of broadcast outlets; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Public Media will develop and recommend policy related to but not limited to electronic media, broadcast television, and radio serving Native Americans in the United States, while maintaining competitive and technological neutrality as to vendor, manufacturers, and retailers; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. government has the opportunity to enact policies that would greatly improve the ability of Native Americans to access, control and secure both traditional and new media; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Nations share an important and unique legal relationship with the U.S. Government; and

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**WHEREAS**, the 2000 Federal Communications Commission *Statement of Policy on Establishing a Government to Government Relationship with Indian Tribes* recognizes and promotes the “general trust responsibility with, and responsibility to, federally-recognized Indian Tribes” and also “recognizes the rights of Indian Tribal governments to set their own communications priorities and goals for the welfare of their membership” (16 FCC Rcd 4078, 4081); and

**WHEREAS**, Native Public Media hopes to advance the creation of participatory and sustainable media throughout Native America by creating a comprehensive blueprint that articulates a vision of Native media that is diverse, customizable, culturally appropriate and includes scalable strategies for getting there. While some assessments of Native media have been conducted, no such blueprint exists for Native America. The need for a blueprint is especially urgent given the dramatic changes in the media industry and the proliferation of new media outlets; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Public Media's "blueprint" project will serve as both guide and plan. It will include diverse media models designed to meet and accommodate various community needs and resources. The blueprint will form the foundation for NPM's direct consultative work with Native Nations, Native organizations, and diverse Native communities as they pursue the media strategies and opportunities that best fits their needs, resources and goals; and

**WHEREAS**, people of color who make up one-third of the U.S. population own only 3.26 percent of television stations and 7.7 percent of full power commercial stations, while women who make up over half of the U.S. population own 4.97 percent TV stations and 6 percent of full power commercial radio stations; and

**WHEREAS**, according to Census 2000, Native Americans and Alaska Natives number at 4.3 million people or 1.5 percent of the total U.S. population and own zero percent of television stations and only .3 percent of the radio stations in the United States with no data of media ownership among Native American women.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby support Native Public Media's position for the creation of a Congressional bi-partisan and independent Task Force to study ownership of media outlets and telecommunications facilities by minorities and Native Nations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Federal Communications Commission provide an opportunity for American Indian and Alaska Native sovereign Tribal entities, and people of color, more time to engage in a thoughtful and deliberate FCC media ownership rulemaking process; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Native Public Media's "blueprint" project will greatly advance the knowledge base about how Native Americans create and access media, providing significant guidance to policymakers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that building media and telecommunications capacity is an important priority that is central to improving the cultural, social, political, economic and educational situation throughout Indian Country; and

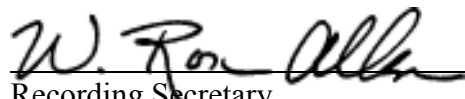
**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2007 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver, Colorado on November 11-16, 2007, with a quorum present.

  
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President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Recording Secretary