



## NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

### The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ABQ-19-005

#### **TITLE: Implementation of the Ashanti Act to Improve Coordination of Missing Persons Response**

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**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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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**, tribal nations across the country have citizens who have disappeared with little or no police response and families are left to organize their own searches and often never find answers or information about their missing loved ones; and

**WHEREAS**, Mark Daniel Aguilar of Ohkay Owingeh and San Felipe Pueblo was 51-years-old in September 2016 when he disappeared and remains missing since that time; the Santa Fe Police Department and the New Mexico Department of Public Safety were contacted to help in locating Mark Daniel Aguilar but have not been able to locate him and his family continues their search; and

**WHEREAS**, Mark Daniel Aguilar's family worked to introduce House Bill 16 during the 2019 sixty-day session of the New Mexico State Legislature to assist in the effort to locate and identify missing and unidentified persons; and

**WHEREAS**, Mark Daniel Aguilar's story is all too common across Indian Country as many families tirelessly search for missing loved ones; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ashanti Alert Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-401) directs the Department of Justice (DOJ), subject to availability of appropriations, to establish a national communication network to assist with efforts to recover missing adults.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports the Ashanti Alert Act of 2018, which directs DOJ to designate a national coordinator to work with states and territories on establishing Ashanti Alerts and to develop voluntary guidelines that states can use in creating their networks and is intended to provide assistance to regional and local search efforts for missing adults through the initiation, facilitation, and promotion of regional and local plans, in coordination with states, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other concerned entities with expertise in providing services to missing adults; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI calls for swift implementation of the Act, and full inclusion of tribal governments; 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 2019 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, October 20-25, 2019, with a quorum present.



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Fawn Sharp, President

**ATTEST:**



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Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary