



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ATL-14-003

TITLE: Support for the Permanent Reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Programs for Indians

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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, 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, American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people have long experienced lower health status when compared with other Americans as is illustrated by a lower life expectancy and a disproportionate disease burden that is reflected in higher mortality rates due to chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, diabetes, unintentional injuries, assault/homicide, intentional self-harm/suicide, and chronic lower respiratory diseases; and

WHEREAS, at 16.1 percent, the American Indian and Alaska Native population has the highest age-adjusted prevalence of diabetes among all U.S. racial and ethnic groups, and an estimated 30% percent of AI/ANs are pre-diabetic; and

WHEREAS, in 1997 Congress addressed the growing epidemic of diabetes in AI/AN communities by passing the Balanced Budget Act which established the Special Diabetes Programs for Indians (SDPI) that provides assistance for developing local initiatives to treat and prevent the disease; and

WHEREAS, SDPI has since served as a comprehensive source of funding to address diabetes issues in tribal communities by providing grants for diabetes prevention and treatment services to more than 400 Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban Indian health programs in 35 states; and

WHEREAS, the grants are critical to improving the overall health of AI/AN people because they greatly enhance the effectiveness of preventative health programs and allow programs aimed at stopping the spread of diabetes to children and young adults to be established; and

WHEREAS, SDPI was last reauthorized in 2014 for a period of 1 year, and its current authorization expires on September 30, 2015, so the work towards permanent reauthorization must begin immediately in order to serve the health needs of AI/AN people related to diabetes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI hereby requests that the United States Congress enact legislation to permanently reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program for Indians and to provide full funding for the permanent continuation of this program; and

BE IT FURTHER 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 2014 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, October 26-31, 2014 in Atlanta, Georgia, with a quorum present.


President

ATTEST:


Recording Secretary