



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ATL-14-079

TITLE: Support for Congressional Oversight Concerning the Bureau of Indian Education Restructuring and Blueprint for Reform

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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, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, the Obama Administration has asserted broad executive authority in implementing the Interior Secretarial Order (No. 3334) to transform the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) based on recommendations of the American Indian Education Study Groups Blueprint for Reform; and

WHEREAS, there is broad based concern throughout Indian Country and with treaty tribes in particular that the BIE realignment is creating statutory conflicts (i.e. the Tribally-Controlled Schools Act of 1988) and being implemented without Congressional authorization nor oversight; and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell has not appeared before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to provide details concerning the BIE restructuring, nor has the Secretary provided congressional appropriations committees with a detailed budget request to pay for the restructuring; and

WHEREAS, Administration officials have erroneously testified to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs that there is no opposition from Indian Country concerning the Blueprint for Reform; and

WHEREAS, to meet the federal government's continuing trust responsibility and to assess measurable trust standards in the field of Indian education through the BIE it is essential that committees of jurisdiction in both the U.S. House of Representatives and U. S. Senate provide Congressional oversight on executive actions concerning the Bureau of Indian Education.


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI will request information, including the work plans pertaining to the Bureau of Indian Education Restructuring and Blueprint for Reform to ascertain if the Secretarial Order creates a statutory conflict with the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 and to document Interior-proposed offsets to pay for the restructuring; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to stipulate before changes are made that tribal consultations inclusive of education leaders and tribal communities


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 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