



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SAC-06-084

TITLE: Improving Federal Responses to Youth Suicide in Indian Country

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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, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that an estimated 900,000 Native youth aged 12- 17 made a plan to commit suicide during their worst or most recent episode of major depression, and 712,000 attempted suicide during such an episode last year; and

WHEREAS, the national rate of suicide for American Indian and Alaskan Native youth is higher than any other racial group in the country and the crisis in some communities is even higher than the national average; and

WHEREAS, the causes of youth suicide are many, but treatable, and children's mental health services and program models in Indian Country are advancing and showing success, such as the Circles of Care programs operating in several tribal communities; and

WHEREAS, efforts to prevent youth suicide in Indian Country have been stifled because of inadequate resources and uncoordinated federal agency responses.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby request that the Administration form an inter-agency working group composed of all federal agencies that have responsibility for addressing children's mental health and related services to develop protocols and policies to improve coordination of resources and services across these agencies; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI request the effected federal agencies fully implement current policies to appropriately consult with tribal governments on the development of the protocols and policies mentioned above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Administration request sufficient budget levels to implement the resulting protocols and policies to improve the federal response to youth suicide in 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.

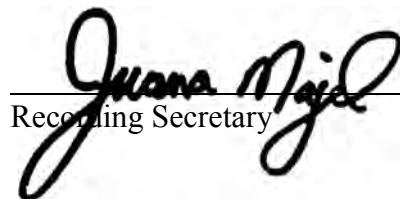
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2006 63rd Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Sacramento Convention Center in Sacramento, California on October 1-6, 2006, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary