



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SPO-16-023

### **TITLE: Appeal to Improve American Indian/Alaska Native Student Identification at the Public K-12 and Higher Education**

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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/Alaska Native populations are often identified by the various federal and state agencies as a minority and the smallest ethnic group in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, steps have been taken by American Indian/Alaska Native leadership to educate federal and state agencies about the unique role of tribes and to promote Indian self-determination on a government-to-government basis and to be consulted on issues significant to Indian Country; and

**WHEREAS**, American Indian/Alaska Native students, families and staff in the public K-12 and higher education levels are impacted by the student registration and identification processes which uses a variety of the federal and state registration forms for specific purposes; i.e., Title VII, Indian Education 506, Johnson O'Malley Certificate of Indian Blood, Migrant Education, Impact Aid, Higher Education and an array of other forms for services; and

**WHEREAS**, the range of state and federal registration forms and processes has caused some of the misidentification of Indian students who are then under-represented and ineligible for various educational services and opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, steps have been or are being taken at state levels to improve the student registration and identification procedures of students from the tribes; however, the need exists for federal student registration forms to be consistently applied in the aforementioned institutions.

**WHEREAS** the US Department of Education issued its final race and ethnicity guidance for the collection of federal education data (72 Federal Register 59267) that proscribes that those American Indian/Alaska Natives who report another race other than only American Indian/Alaska Native are reported as only multiracial and those who report their ethnicity as Hispanic to be reported as only Hispanic, resulting in a decrease in the actual number of American Indian/Alaska Native students reported to attend public schools and a subsequent decrease in the Title VII funding available to school districts and/or Tribes.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians appeals to the various federal agencies including, but not limited to, the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Census Bureau, and state agencies to take the necessary steps to engage American Indians/Alaska Natives to correct and improve the identification processes for American Indian/Alaska Native students to achieve equitable and optimal educational opportunities for students; and

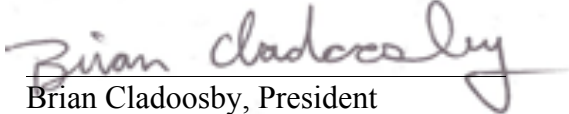
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NCAI urges that the US Department of Education assess the negative impact of the continued use of their current Race and Ethnicity Guidance for the Collection of Federal Education Data upon tribes and tribal people in full compliance with Executive Order 13175 and their own Department-wide consultation policy and process to conduct consultation with Indian Tribes and Alaska Natives; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI does hereby support the current goal of American Indians/Alaska Natives to address the misidentification and under-representation of Indian students through local and regional collaboration being conducted with state and federal agencies.

**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 2016 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, June 27 to June 30, 2016, with a quorum present.

  
Brian Cladoosby, President

**ATTEST:**

  
Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary