



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #LNK-12-001

TITLE: Support for “Plan B” Over the Counter for All American Indian Women Who Are Seventeen Years and Older

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 Native American Women’s Health Education Resource Center (NAWHERC) provides direct services to American Indian women in South Dakota and advocates for American Indian women nationally and internationally; and NCAI has worked closely with NAWHERC in the past; and

WHEREAS, NAWHERC organized three historic convening’s of Indigenous women in three regions in 2011 – March 15 in Rapid City, SD, June 11 in Oklahoma City, OK and August 20 in Albuquerque, NM, with attendees representing 28 Tribal Nations and many non- government organizations participating; and

WHEREAS, these Roundtables were convened to discuss the issue of access to safe and effective emergency birth control in the form of Plan B which will prevent abortions. *In the US, women age 17 and over have the legal right to get emergency contraception -- sometimes called Plan B or “the morning after pill -- over the counter and without a prescription at their pharmacy;* and

WHEREAS, the Roundtable Report on Access to Plan B documents critical inconsistencies in health care service delivery to American Indian and Alaska Native women seeking safe, emergency contraception treatment within IHS , including emergency rooms and contract health care facilities/providers; and

WHEREAS, statistics show that 27% of American Indian and Alaska Native youth reported having received no routine health care in the last 2 years; 41% of Native youth reported having no health insurance at all (Native American Women’s Health Education Resource Center Report), and 92% of Native girls who have had sexual intercourse reported having been forced against their will to have sex - 62% of those girls reported to have been pregnant by the end of the 12th grade; and

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WHEREAS, the Bureau of Justice Statistical Profile indicates that the violent victimization among American Indian and Alaska Native women was more than double that among all women. Further American Indians and Alaska Native women are more likely to be victims of assault and rape/sexual assault committed by a stranger or acquaintance rather than an intimate partner or family member; and

WHEREAS, if an American Indian and Alaska Native woman receives her primary health care from an IHS clinic, they do not have consistent access to Plan B without waiting to undergo an exam and receive a prescription; and

WHEREAS, the Roundtable Report exposes the human and sovereign rights that are being contradicted within the policies of the I.H.S.... "As Native women we are the only race of women that is denied this service based on race. To make an exception to a legal form of contraception based on race is not acceptable;" and

WHEREAS, the working group of NAWHERC Roundtable has laid out the framework for a national public education campaign for the immediate and over the counter access to safe emergency contraception (Plan B), that will prevent the need for an abortion or unwanted pregnancy, for all American Indian and Alaska Native women (whether from unprotected sex, a broken condom or as victims of rape, incest or sexual assault).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI will partner with the working group of the NAWHERC Roundtable, Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center Reproductive Justice Coalition, and the Tribal Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Coalitions providing them the necessary information to support and advocate for the inclusion of Plan B "over the counter" at all I.H.S. Service Units; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI will urge the adoption and implementation of the over-the-counter access to Plan B within all IHS Service Units and emergency rooms and Contract Health Care facilities/providers pharmacy formularies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NCAI will request Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, the Director of IHS, to issue a directive to all service providers that emergency contraception be made available on demand -- without a prescription and without having to see a doctor -- to any woman age 17 or over who asks for it; 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 2012 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at The Cornhusker Hotel from June 17-20, 2012 in Lincoln, Nebraska, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary