The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #MSP-15-028

TITLE: To Oppose the Federal Government Prohibition from Sponsoring Conferences on Tribal Properties

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 U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) provided a May 12, 2014 Memorandum that provided guidance that states, “In general, FHWA will not sponsor conferences at, nor allow employees to stay at, resorts or hotels with casinos, including those on tribal lands. For conferences held at such facilities, FHWA employees may be permitted to attend the meetings at a resort or casino, but must stay at an off-site facility. Also, regardless of cost, the Executive Director must approve (co) sponsorship of any conferences that will be held in foreign locales, renowned vacation destinations, recreational sites, or resorts with casinos, including those on tribal lands;” and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 2015, the Tribal Transportation Program Coordinating Committee (TTPCC) wrote a letter to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs and the Associate Administrator—Federal Lands Highway Program, FHWA, requesting that the May 12, 2015 U.S. DOT, FHWA memorandum be revised to exclude meetings of the TTPCC; and

WHEREAS, Tribes believe the prohibition to sponsor federally hosted meetings is fundamentally flawed, bordering on policy that is a detriment to tribal government operations, tribal economic development and does not comply with the Department of Interior “Buy Indian” regulations; and

WHEREAS, Tribes are concerned that this policy becomes a federal-wide policy for all departments and agencies and undermines the President’s E.O. 13175 for “government-to-government” consultation and supporting Tribal economies.
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby oppose any federal policy or guidance of the DOT, FHWA or any other federal department or agency that prohibits hosting federal meetings on tribal lands and/or properties and strongly recommends that these policies be revoked; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI support all federal agencies hosting its federal meetings on tribal lands and/or properties; 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 2015 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the St. Paul River Centre, St. Paul, MN, June 28 to July 1, 2015, with a quorum present.

Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:

Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary