TITLE: Requesting the Department of the Interior Extend the Deadline for the Cobell Land Buy Back Program

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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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, there are tribal nations nationally who were unable to meet the July 27th, 2017 deadline required by the Cobell/Department of the Interior (DOI) Land Buy Back Program (LBBP) due to unforeseen circumstances, such as Constitutional revisions, lack of resources, or other matters, and would still like to be fully involved in the LBBP; and

WHEREAS, these tribal nations will be severely impacted by an inability to grow their trust lands in a cohesive way which benefits the health of their tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, Cobell/DOI LBBP helps address the problem of fractionated interest of tribal lands and in doing so restores greater regulatory authority to tribes over lands within their jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, Cobell/DOI LBBP needs to assess its progress with its current schedule and revise its schedule to add locations for interested tribal nations that have demonstrated readiness and are not on the current schedule.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports a deadline extension of the Cobell/Department of the Interior Land Buy Back Program for impacted tribal nations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.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 2018 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency in Denver, Colorado October 21-26, 2018, with a quorum present.

ATTEST:

Jefferson Keel, President

Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary