



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #REN-19-036

TITLE: Supporting the Expansion of Opportunity Zones 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 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, many parts of Indian Country have been excluded from economic development opportunities that are available to much of the country; and

WHEREAS, the federal government defines Indian Country as “all land within the limits of any Indian reservation under the jurisdiction of the United States Government, notwithstanding the issuance of any patent, and, including rights-of-way running through the reservation, all dependent Indian communities within the borders of the United States whether within the original or subsequently acquired territory thereof, and whether within or without the limits of a state, and all Indian allotments, the Indian titles to which have not been extinguished, including rights-of-way running through the same”; and

WHEREAS, Opportunity Zones created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 act as an incentive for investment in economically distressed areas; and

WHEREAS, the current process for Opportunity Zone designation is problematic for Indian Country as it places the authority with states’ governors and does not allow for tribal nations to work directly with the Administration to designate their own Opportunity Zones; and

WHEREAS, this has created a situation where many tribal nations across Indian Country have been disregarded and ignored by their respective states when creating these zones; and

WHEREAS, the Treasury Tribal Advisory Committee has expressed support for all eligible Census tracts within Indian Country to be named Opportunity Zones; and

WHEREAS, the expansion of Opportunity Zones has also been supported by the current Administration and the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) shall support the expansion of Opportunity Zones across Indian Country, including tribal jurisdictional areas in Oklahoma and Alaska, so that tribal nations have the same economic development opportunities as the rest of the country and to further improve the quality of life for Native peoples; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

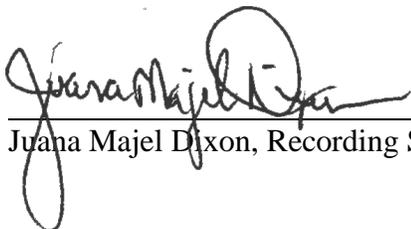
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2019 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Nugget Casino Resort, June 24-27, 2019, with a quorum present.



Jefferson Keel, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary