



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ABQ-10-009

TITLE: Provide for American Indians Equitable Access to Cooperative Extension by Urging USDA Action on the Recommendations of the FRTEP Design Team Interim Report

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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, the Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP), formerly known as the Extension Indian Reservation Program (EIRP) was authorized by the 1990 Farm Bill (Section 1677, P.L. 101-624), and directed that the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Extension Service (now National Institute of Food and Agriculture—NIFA) shall establish appropriate extension education programs on Indian reservations and tribal jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the enabling legislation specified consultation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) and the Southwest Indian Agriculture Association (SWIAA); and

WHEREAS, IAC and SWIAA, along with many other Indian and non-Indian organizations and supporters have worked tirelessly to educate Congress, Tribes and land-grant universities about the value and importance of such an educational program; and

WHEREAS, NIFA is the federal partner jointly administering Cooperative Extension programs with individual state “1862” authorized land-grant universities, utilizing funds from municipal, county, state, federal government and extramural sources; and

WHEREAS, there are about approximately 9,000+ full-time equivalents (FTE's) of 1862 university faculty and academic professional extension workers employed in 3,050 counties (97 % of all counties) in all 50 states, territories and possessions; and

WHEREAS, there are 565 federally recognized tribes, and 314 federally recognized Indian reservations in the United States, being served by only 29 FTE's of extension faculty dedicated solely to Indian reservation extension education—(4 % of all tribes); and

WHEREAS, tribes do not have the luxury of a well-established institutional, financial and political relationship with Extension and the 1862 system through local Extension offices contrasted with virtually every county in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, although the enabling legislation authorized “such sums as may be necessary” in federal financial support for FRTEP, Congress has never appropriated more than \$3.0 million; and

WHEREAS, Indian people, especially those living on reservations, lack equity on this point and ask for the same access to 1862 land-grant university extension educational programs that neighboring non-Indian communities have received for over 96 years (since the inception of Extension work initially authorized under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, P.L. 63-95, as amended).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI fully supports the recommendations of the FRTEP Design Team Interim Report to (1) immediately and permanently fund the “three orphan” programs at Window Rock, Zuni, and Jicarilla Apache that were eliminated without tribal consultation; (2) change FRTEP from a competitive to a formula-funded program similar to county Extension programs; (3) make immediate plans to add approximately 60 offices to the program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI will participate in the discussions and surveys scheduled to follow the Design Team Interim Report dealing with “demand for” and “status of” FRTEP across the U.S.; and

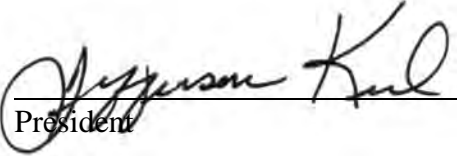
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI believes its support of FRTEP expansion is fully complementary to the positive impacts of the “1994” Tribal Colleges and Universities extension programs; but distinct in that it leverages unique organizational flexibility within FRTEP to rapidly expand services to potentially hundreds of reservations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI shall, at least annually, petition the Congress of the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and NIFA to provide adequate and equitable funding for this necessary program such that it is within reach of every American Indian; and

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

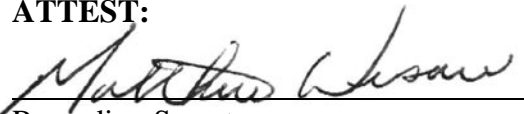
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2010 Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center in Albuquerque, NM on November 14-19, 2010, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary