



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ATL-14-015

### **TITLE: Urgent Need for Congress to Promptly Pass the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Amendments Act of 2014 (S. 919 and H.R. 4546)**

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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 tribally-initiated Interior Tribal Self-Governance Project has been a great success, growing from the transfer, in 1991, of \$27.1 million to seven Indian Tribes for tribally administered priorities to the transfer, today, of over \$435 million to 265 Indian Tribes administering programs, functions, services and activities according to tribal priorities; and

**WHEREAS**, under tribal self-governance authority, Indian Tribes have greater control and flexibility in the use of federal funds to meet tribally-determined needs; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1994, Congress enacted tribally-requested provisions permanently authorizing the successful Interior Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Project, but the regulations subsequently adopted by the Interior Department restricted and constrained that statutory authority; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2000, Congress enacted tribally-requested reform provisions permanently authorizing self-governance authority for the Indian Health Service (IHS) but did not enact comparable tribally-requested legislation reforming the self-governance authority governing Interior Department programs; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2000, Congress has failed to enact tribally-requested Interior Tribal Self-Governance Amendments legislation, despite multiple hearings, committee reports, and passage of the bill by the House in 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 4546 and S. 919, the tribally-requested Interior Tribal Self-Governance Amendments legislation in the current 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, would reform Interior self-governance rules to match those governing IHS self-governance agreements, thereby removing the inefficiency now burdening Indian Tribes who must meet dual, sometimes differing requirements as they administer self-governance agreements with Interior and IHS; and

**WHEREAS**, both the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs have held hearings on H.R. 4546 and S. 919 during the current 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Obama Administration and tribal leaders have repeatedly testified in support of enactment, and the bills enjoy strong bi-partisan support.

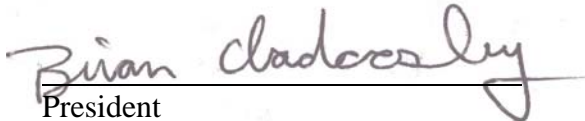
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI, its leadership, and its executive staff shall call on the U.S. Congress and the Administration to support immediate enactment of either H.R. 4546 or S. 919 before the end of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that, if the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress adjourns before enacting H.R. 4546 or S. 919, the members of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress make reintroduction and early enactment of this legislation a top priority to accomplish within the first 100 days of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress and without further delay; 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 2014 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, October 26-31, 2014 in Atlanta, Georgia, with a quorum present.

  
President

ATTEST:

  
Recording Secretary