



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PHX-16-016

TITLE: In Support of Establishing an Assistant Secretary of Indian Education, Department of Interior

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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 Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school system includes 183 elementary and secondary schools and dormitories, serving some 48,000 students, with schools located in 23 states and on 54 reservations; and

WHEREAS, the BIE is a bureau within the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), under the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs (ASIA); and

WHEREAS, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has issued numerous reports detailing systematic problems with the organization of the BIE, as well as the crumbling infrastructure at the schools themselves; and

WHEREAS, BIE leadership does not have the decision making power to holistically support its students; and

WHEREAS, all major decisions at DOI related to Native issues happen in ASIA, which minimizes BIE's voice to advocate on behalf of its students due to the competing interests within the ASIS office; and

WHEREAS, the BIE Blueprint for Reform, supported by NCAI through Resolution SD-15-073 (Supporting the Bureau of Indian Education's Reorganization and Reprogramming of Funding) and Resolution ATL-14-079 (Support for Congressional Oversight Concerning the Bureau of Indian Education Restructuring and Blueprint for Reform) begins to take the necessary steps to streamline services for BIE schools through centralizing functions within the BIE, the Blueprint for Reform does not address the lack of consistent leadership within the agency; and

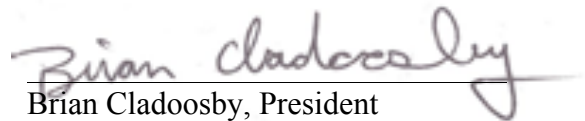
WHEREAS, in order for the Blueprint for Reform to be successful and for BIE to best support students attending BIE funded and operated schools, there must be leadership with direct access to the secretarial level where policy changes and implementation occur.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians calls on the incoming Administration, Congress, and the Secretary of Interior to create an Assistant Secretary of Indian Education to report directly to the Secretary of Interior within the first year of the new administration; 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 2016 Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Phoenix Convention Center, October 9 to October 14, 2016, with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:


Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary