



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

Resolutions Committee Recommendation

Resolution # REN-19-026:

Title: Support of Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act

Comments:

This resolution addresses the need to reauthorize and fund the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act. The resolution is national in scope since it addresses a federal program that is intended to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs, including language nests, language survival schools, and language restoration programs.

Recommendations:

NCAI currently has a standing resolution on this issue in support of the reauthorization of The Esther Martinez Native American Preservation Act; therefore this resolution is duplicative of an already existing resolution. (See resolution #[SAC-12-013](#)). Recommend to table this resolution as it has already been addressed.

Sponsor a member in good standing (yes/no)?: _____



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #REN-19-026

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Jefferson Keel
Chickasaw Nation

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Nancy Carnley
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Tohono O'odham Nation

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
KEVIN ALLIS
*FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI
COMMUNITY*

NCAI HEADQUARTERS
1516 P Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
202.466.7767
202.466.7797 fax
www.ncai.org

TITLE: Support of Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act

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, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 (Public Law 109- 394, H.R. 4766) expired in FY 2012 and must be reauthorized and fully funded as an investment in Native American cultural and language preservation; and

WHEREAS, United States Senate Bill S. 256 reauthorizes and strengthens the Act to preserve and increase fluency in Native American languages, as Native American languages are in rapid decline and are not spoken anywhere else in the world; and

WHEREAS, preserving Native languages is integral to preserving indigenous knowledge based on thousands of years of observation and application of natural laws and is essential to addressing challenges facing our country and global community today; and

WHEREAS, linguists estimate that, at the current rate of decline, there may be only 20 Native American languages remaining by the year 2050 and if they are not preserved, they will disappear forever; and

WHEREAS, the Act amends the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to allow the Administration for Native Americans, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to award grants to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs, including language nests, language survival schools, and language restoration programs; and

WHEREAS, in addition to creating fluency, Native language immersion programs have been shown to promote higher academic success for students who participate in Native language immersion programs compared to their Native peers who do not participate in these programs; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs recently held a mark-up on the Native American Language Preservation Act which was favorably acted upon in support of Native American Languages.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) does hereby urge the U.S. Congress to reauthorize and fund the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act as an investment in the Cultural and Language Revitalization goals of the tribes throughout Indian Country; 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 2019 Mid-Year Conference 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



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians
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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, through its unique relationship with ~~Indian nations and~~ ~~tribestribal nations~~, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, ~~and Native Hawaiians~~, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 (Public Law 109- 394, H.R. 4766) expired in FY 2012 and must be reauthorized and fully funded as an investment in Native American cultural and language preservation; and

WHEREAS, ~~United States Senate Bill~~ S. 256 reauthorizes and strengthens the Act to preserve and increase fluency in Native American languages, as Native American languages are in rapid decline and are not spoken anywhere else in the world; and

WHEREAS, preserving Native languages is integral to preserving indigenous knowledge based on thousands of years of observation and application of natural laws and is essential to addressing challenges facing our country and global community today; and

WHEREAS, linguists estimate that, at the current rate of decline, there may be only 20 Native American languages remaining by the year 2050 and if they are not preserved, they will disappear forever; and

WHEREAS, the Act amends the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to allow the Administration for Native Americans, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to award grants to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs, including language nests, language survival schools, and language restoration programs; and

WHEREAS, in addition to creating fluency, Native language immersion programs have been shown to promote higher academic success for students who participate in Native language immersion programs compared to their Native peers who do not participate in these programs; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs recently held a mark-up on [S. 256](#), the Native American Language Preservation Act which was favorably acted upon in support of Native American Languages.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) does hereby urge the U.S. Congress to reauthorize and fund the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act as an investment in the Cultural and Language Revitalization goals of ~~the tribal~~ [tribal nations](#) throughout Indian Country; and

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

CERTIFICATION

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