



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution # REN-13-030

TITLE: Enhancement of Authorities and Opportunities to Pursue the Recovery and Protection of Sacred Sites and Sacred Objects

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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, American Indians hold certain sites sacred as a result of the site's traditional and cultural religious significance to the Tribe's people and attribute great cultural and religious significance and meaning to sacred objects and bestow on them the highest regard and divine status; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture has recently finalized the USDA Policy and Procedures Review and Recommendations on Indian Sacred Sites; and

WHEREAS, several United States' agencies including the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to improve the protection of and tribal access to Indian sacred sites in furtherance of the Sacred Sites Report; and

WHEREAS, the NCAI has worked tirelessly in its advocacy and efforts for the protection and preservation of sacred sites and sacred objects; and

WHEREAS, it is vital to the NCAI Members that these sacred sites and sacred objects be protected and preserved and treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve; and

WHEREAS, the NCAI endeavors to take all actions and efforts necessary for the protection and preservation of sacred sites and the recovery and protection of sacred objects belonging to American Indians and NCAI Members; and

WHEREAS, steps must be taken to focus the present attention to sacred sites and advocate in a way that ensures meaningful and positive results for the preservation and protection of sacred sites and sacred objects; and

WHEREAS, efforts must be made to enhance available authorities and opportunities to recover and protect sacred objects and to prevent the recurrence of the unauthorized sale of sacred objects.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI authorizes the Human, Religious & Cultural Concerns Subcommittee of the Litigation & Governance Committee to pursue all available legal means to assert the NCAI's interest in the protection and preservation of Sacred Sites and to pursue all available legal means and opportunities to advocate for enhanced authorities and to pursue recovery and protection of sacred objects that belong to and are held sacred by American Indians and the NCAI Member Tribes; 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 2013 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Atlantis Casino from June 24 - 27, 2013 in Reno, Nevada with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary