



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NIEA Resolution 2013-10

TITLE: SUPPORT FOR UPHOLDING THE FEDERAL TRUST RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH FUNDING NATIVE EDUCATION AND ENDING SEQUESTRATION

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA, as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with tribes and Native communities, 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 unique relationship upheld through treaties and the U.S. Constitution guarantees that the federal government has a trust, treaty and statutory obligation to Indian tribes and Native education; and

WHEREAS, the underpinning of federal spending in Native communities is based in the treaties that the Native ancestors signed with the US government and other obligations; and

WHEREAS, this assistance and goodwill between nations derives from the trust relationship, and is engrained within Article I, Section 8, of the US Constitution; and

WHEREAS, fulfillment of many of the trust and treaty obligations reside in the discretionary portion of the federal budget, which are subjected to severe 2013 sequester cuts and may endure further reductions due to the Budget Control Act in FY 2014 and in future years; and

WHEREAS, tribes and Native communities across the United States have effectively used federal funding received through the Departments of the Interior, Education, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Justice, and Transportation, among others, to improve the economic, social and education circumstances for Native people;

WHEREAS, education, health care, housing, roads and transit, child welfare, social services, domestic violence programs, corrections, and many other critical governmental services have been historically underfunded and have failed to meet the needs in Native communities as documented in the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in the Quiet Crisis report, Broken Promises report, Amnesty International's report, Maze of Injustice, and gap reports from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service; and

WHEREAS, sequestration called for in the Budget Control Act has imposed draconian reductions to Native-serving programs that were already underfunded, resulting in the following impacts in FY 2013:

- The Indian Head Start program, which provides education, nutrition, health and parental involvement services, was reduced by nearly \$12 million in FY 2013. Twenty-five thousand Native children from 26 states are experiencing losses in much-needed early education and health services;
- Impact Aid, which predominantly provides funding to public schools serving Native students, absorbed \$67 million in cuts, causing reductions to schools serving approximately 115,000 Native students;
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs lost \$119 million due to sequestration in FY 2013, hurting public safety programs, education, road maintenance, housing improvement, child welfare services, and tribal welfare assistance for 1.7 million American Indians and Alaska Natives;
- Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) endured more than a 5 percent cut to their operational budgets in FY 2013, which was significant given that TCUs have never received full funding based on their appropriation authorized by Congress —roughly 70 percent of \$8,000 in FY 2012, impacting more than 75 campuses in 15 states and more than 88,000 American Indian and Alaskan Natives in more than 250 tribes;
- Further reductions to the USDA Food Distribution Program in Native communities, Child Care and Development Block Grants, Administration for Native Americans and many others are taking a large toll on services; and

WHEREAS, the NIEA passed a prior resolution, Urging the U.S. Congress to Prevent Sequestration and the \$100 Million Cut to Impact Aid (NIEA Res 12-03), in 2012

expressing the need to prevent sequestration because such cuts would disproportionately impact Native education and communities; and

WHEREAS, if sequester continues, reductions in FY 2014 would severely—and, likely, permanently—undermine the ability of tribes, service providers, schools, TCUS, clinics, and other agencies in Native communities that serve Native children and uphold the federal trust responsibility; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NIEA calls for Congress to reach a budget agreement that meets the nation's obligations to tribal nations and Native peoples; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NIEA formally opposes the application of sequestration pursuant to the Balanced Budget Act of 2011 to any programs impacting Native education and communities in the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NIEA supports finding a fiscal solution that removes the sequestration reductions set to go into place in the future.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on November 2, 2013 at which a quorum of the membership was present.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pam Agoyo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pam Agoyo
President