



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ATL-14-026

TITLE: Call to Begin Education and Healing From Historical and Intergenerational Trauma

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Tlingit

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

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, in the 19th and 20th Centuries the United States and various Churches implemented a federal Indian Boarding School policy, the purpose of which was to eradicate Native cultures, traditions, and languages, in an attempt to “civilize” and Christianize Native children through methods that included physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse; and

WHEREAS, between 1869 and the 1960s at least 100,000 Native American children were removed from their homes and families, often forcibly, and placed in distant Boarding Schools funded and operated by the federal government and the churches; and

WHEREAS, at these Boarding Schools children were punished for speaking their native language, banned from acting in any way that might be seen to represent traditional or cultural practices, stripped of traditional clothing, hair and all things and behaviors reflective of their native culture, shamed for being Native American, and commonly abused and neglected by inadequate and hostile staff; and

WHEREAS, while some survivors of Boarding Schools report having a positive experience, most of these children and the generations that followed bear the detrimental effects of the Boarding School Policy where they have suffered and continue to suffer broken tribal families and communities, as well as the loss of culture, language, and identity; and

WHEREAS, while the Canadian Government, together with the Canadian Churches, have formally acknowledged and taken actions to document the residential and boarding school legacy, and to promote healing and reconciliation from the residential and boarding school era, the historical trauma afflicting American Indians and Alaskan Natives as a result of the U.S. Boarding School Policy has gone largely unrecognized and unresolved, and the Country remains largely ignorant of the burdens created by the policy and its consequences; and

WHEREAS, healing from the harms currently experienced by Native people, families, communities and Nations is hampered by the lack of awareness of the Boarding School policy and consequences of its implementation; and

WHEREAS, it is of vital importance to begin the healing process from historical trauma the boarding schools have caused our people and Nations, and the first step in this healing will be development of greater knowledge and education about what happened during that era, its continuing impacts on our people, families, communities, and Nations, and the United States and responsible Churches.

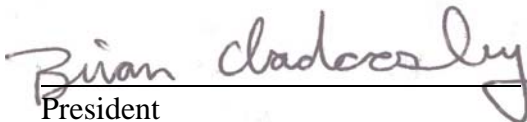
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI hereby calls for a beginning to the process of healing from the historical and intergenerational traumas brought by the Boarding School policies and the harms it caused our people, families, communities, Nations, the United States, and the various Churches; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in pursuit of the healing, NCAI hereby supports development of more knowledge and education about what happened during the boarding school era, how it continues to create impacts for the descendants of survivors, and how meaningful healing paradigms can work to turn back the ongoing effects of historical and intergenerational trauma that currently continue to plague our communities; and

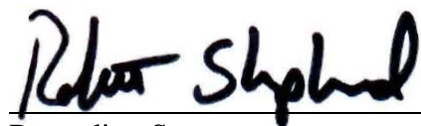
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 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