



**INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL
40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PHILLIP DEERE FAMILY ROUNDHOUSE
OKEMAH OKLAHOMA
SEPTEMBER 10TH – 12TH , 2014**

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE
AND REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ONGOING EFFECTS
RESULTING OF THE FORCIBLE REMOVAL OF CHILDREN AND SUBSEQUENT
ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESULTING FROM THE BOARDING SCHOOL POLICY OR
PEACE POLICY ADOPTED AND IMPLEMENTED DURING THE 19TH AND 20TH
CENTURIES**

WHEREAS, the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) is an organization of Indigenous Peoples from North, Central, South America, the Caribbean and the Pacific working for the Sovereignty and Self Determination of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of Indigenous Rights, Treaties, Traditional Cultures and Sacred Lands; and

WHEREAS, THE IITC serves as a voice and advocate for the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, Nations, Communities and Tribes locally, nationally and internationally; and

WHEREAS, the United States, at the urging of and in support of the Christian Churches of that time, adopted the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819 to provide financial support for church run schools to “civilize” Native American children through an education program intended to eradicate Native American culture; and

WHEREAS, in 1869, the United States, in concert with and at the urging of several denominations of the Christian Church, adopted the Indian the Boarding School Policy or Peace Policy of the removal and reprogramming of Native American children to accomplish the systematic destruction of indigenous cultures and communities, a deliberate policy of cultural genocide; and

WHEREAS, between 1869 and the 1960s at least 100,000 Native American children were removed from their homes and families, often involuntarily, and placed in Boarding Schools far from their homes which were funded by the federal government and operated by the federal government and the churches, where children were punished for speaking their native

language, banned from acting in any way that might be seen to represent traditional or cultural practices, shorn of hair, stripped of traditional clothing 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, the prevailing attitudes of the time allowed neglect and abuse of children who were overseen but not parented, who were bullied and assaulted not only by the adults but also by older children under the modeling and instruction of the caretakers and staff, and who were neglected *en masse* through the denial of adequate food and medical care. These children observed and suffered physical, emotional, cultural, spiritual, psychological and sexual abuse, and punishment by physical restraints, beatings and isolation in inhospitable surroundings, including unlighted cellars and unventilated outbuildings designed as jails; and

WHEREAS, these children, their children and now their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, bear the burden of the legacy of the boarding schools and the federal policy that established and sustained those schools, where the children suffered trauma that has gone unrecognized and unresolved, and has been passed onto each subsequent generation; and

WHEREAS, this historical and inter-generational trauma continues to work in, undermine and devastate Native American individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, neither the United States nor any national denomination of the Christian churches in the United States has offered a meaningful acknowledgment of responsibility or offered to provide any redress for the generations of harm caused by the deliberate imposition of the policy of cultural genocide on the Native American children, families, communities, tribes, Pueblos or Alaskan Villages; and

WHEREAS, the facts and history about the pervasive harm and egregious human rights violations caused and continuing to be caused by the ongoing intergenerational trauma resulting from the US Boarding School Policy are poorly understood by the American public, the National Churches, the Congress and the Executive Branch of the federal government; and

WHEREAS, in order to begin a healing process to address the harms suffered and enduring as a result of the Boarding School Policy, a comprehensive national study is needed of the history of the Policy and its impacts: such study should include complete documentation of the events that took place at each of the schools, the fate of each of the students, the gathering of testimony from those who suffered from abuse, neglect or other trauma, and recommendations to Congress based on the information gathered from individual victims, communities and experts concerning the nature of the harms and potential paradigms for healing and reconciliation; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Indian Treaty Council does hereby support the creation of a comprehensive national study, to be concluded by issuance of a report on the implementation and continuing impacts of American Indian Boarding School Policy, which will provide complete documentation of the events that took place at each of the schools, the fate of each of the students, the gathering of testimony from those who suffered from abuse, neglect or other trauma, and recommendations to Congress based on the information

gathered from individual victims as well as families, Tribal Nations, communities and experts concerning the nature of the harms and potential models for redress, healing, justice and reconciliation as well as additional study and research carried out in conjunction with the impacted Indigenous individuals, families, Peoples and Nations.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by consensus of the 40th Anniversary International Indian Treaty Council Conference in Okemah, Oklahoma, on the 12th day of August, 2014



Certified by Andrea Carmen
IITC Executive Director



Certified by Ronald Lameman,
Recording Secretary for the
IITC Board of Directors