



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

**The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #REN-19-038**

TITLE: Calling on Congress for Permanent Mandatory Support for the U.S. Department of Education's Strengthening Institutions Program for Tribal Colleges and Universities

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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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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, the federal government has a moral and legal responsibility to federally recognized tribal nations; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal governments and the United States have chartered 37 tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) to ensure that high quality, culturally based tribal higher education is accessible to AI/AN people, who have historically been excluded from most state-supported higher education programs; and

WHEREAS, TCUs serve more than 130,000 AI/ANs and other rural residents each year through a wide variety of academic- and community-based programs that make vital contributions to tribal nation building; and

WHEREAS, TCUs fulfill a fundamental role in maintaining, preserving, and revitalizing irreplaceable AI/AN languages and cultural traditions and strengthen Indigenous peoples worldwide; and

WHEREAS, federal funding for American Indian higher education – including funding for TCU operations, American Indian scholarships from the U.S. Department of the Interior, TCU land-grant programming from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Native language research, Adult Basic Education, career readiness, and student success initiatives from the U.S. Department of Education – is woefully and chronically inadequate; and

WHEREAS, the oldest TCU in the nation was chartered by the Navajo Nation in 1968 and is now more than 50 years old, while the newest TCU – San Carlos Tribal College – was chartered by the San Carlos Apache Tribe in 2014; and

WHEREAS, TCUs compose the nation’s youngest group of institutions of higher education and therefore are developing and growing institutions, as contemplated for support under Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA); and

WHEREAS, mandatory funding under HEA Title III-Part F will expire after fiscal year 2019, essentially cutting in half TCU Title III funding and resulting in a loss of nearly \$30 million annually to TCUs and the tribal students, families, and communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, Senators Doug Jones (D-AL) and Tim Scott (R-SC) have introduced S. 1279, the Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act, to provide two years of mandatory funding for HEA Title III Part F and companion legislation has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) supports permanent reauthorization of the HEA Title III-Part F Strengthening Institutions-Tribal Colleges and Universities Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Education, at a minimum level of \$35 million annually with increases thereafter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI urges Congress to immediately enact S. 1279, the FUTURE Act, to extend the HEA Title III-Part F Strengthening Institutions-Tribal Colleges and Universities program at the current mandatory level of \$30 million per year for two years, while working to secure permanent funding of the program; and

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

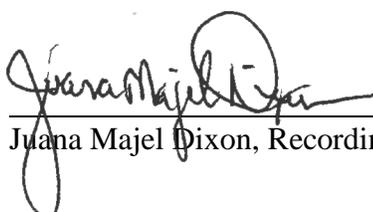
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2019 Mid-Year Session 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