

2023 ANNUAL AFN CONVENTION

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

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BOARD SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-01

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ALASKA NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING RIGHTS AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO PERMANENTLY PROTECT THE RIGHT OF ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN SUBSISTENCE FISHING IN ALASKA’S NAVIGABLE WATERS
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native people have occupied and stewarded our territories since time immemorial, and our traditional ways of life are intimately bound to the land, waters, animals, and seasons of the natural world; and
- WHEREAS: Our hunting, fishing, and gathering practices—including the harvesting and sharing of fish, game, and other resources and the ceremonies that accompany these practices—are essential to the social, cultural, spiritual, and economic wellbeing and survival of Alaska Native people; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native people have relied on fishing to sustain our customary and traditional way of life for centuries, and fishing remains an essential subsistence practice to this day; and
- WHEREAS: The right to continue to harvest our traditional resources and live our traditional subsistence way of life was one of the commitments that Congress made to Alaska Native people when it enacted Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980; and
- WHEREAS: In ANILCA, Congress declared that the continuation of the opportunity for subsistence uses on public lands is “essential to Native physical, economic, traditional, and cultural existence” and expressly provided a subsistence priority for rural Alaskans on most federal lands and waters in Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: In ANILCA, Congress recognized that subsistence activities are a matter of food security because “in most cases, no practical alternative means are available to replace the food supplies and other items gathered from fish and wildlife which supply rural residents dependent on subsistence uses”; and

- WHEREAS: the State of Alaska attempted to accommodate the federal requirements in Title VIII of ANILCA and, for several years, had a state subsistence regime supported by state statutes, regulations, and administrative capability. In late 1989, the State Supreme Court, in the McDowell decision, undercut the constitutional authority for the State to remain in compliance with Title VIII of ANILCA and have a unified state management plan for fish and game, including subsistence uses; and
- WHEREAS: under Title VIII of ANILCA, once the State of Alaska no longer had a unified state management system that protected subsistence hunting and fishing, the US Department of Interior and the US Department of Agriculture responded to the failure by taking back its delegated authority to the State of Alaska over federal public lands and waters for subsistence uses; and
- WHEREAS: the Governor and Alaska State Legislative leadership of the State of Alaska, together with the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the U.S. Secretary of Interior, Alaska Native leaders, and others attempted to address the state constitutional barrier by proposing a state constitutional amendment to give the Alaska State Legislature the authority to have an adequate state statute and regain the ability to have unified state management; and
- WHEREAS: the Governor called numerous Special Sessions of the Alaska State Legislature and engaged in consecutive regular sessions over a ten-year timeframe to adopt a State Constitutional amendment to put forward to Alaskan voters to ratify. Despite surveys that demonstrated a majority of citizens supported a vote on the Constitutional amendment guaranteeing a rural subsistence priority, The Governor and the Alaska State Legislature failed to advance a state constitutional amendment by one vote; and
- WHEREAS: the US Secretary of Interior and US Secretary of Agriculture exercised their responsibilities to protect subsistence hunting and fishing opportunities by setting up a federal regulatory scheme – the Federal Subsistence Board and Advisory Council. Over the last 30 years, the Federal Subsistence Board and advisory councils have implemented the federal responsibility, changing and improving implementation over time; and
- WHEREAS: throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the State of Alaska proved itself repeatedly incapable of and unwilling to protect subsistence fishing rights across rural Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: Katie John, and Doris Charles, respected and cherished Ahtna Elders, were the lead plaintiffs in a series of successful cases that protected federal subsistence fisheries pursuant to Title VIII of ANILCA; and
- WHEREAS: The *Katie John* litigation spanned nearly thirty years; it ended in 2014 and affirmed a rural priority for subsistence fishing; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska has nonetheless chosen, for decades, to continue to attack the federal subsistence fisheries protections enshrined in Title VIII of ANILCA and the *Katie John* cases despite the fact that commercial fisheries harvest over 95% of fish stocks, subsistence and sports fishing is less than 5%.; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska has escalated its attacks in recent years and has undertaken a series of new, aggressive litigation aimed at actively undermining Alaska Natives' right to subsistence; and

WHEREAS: In one of those cases, *United States v. Alaska*, the State of Alaska now attempts to rewrite longstanding law and erase the *Katie John* decisions; and

WHEREAS: A decision from the United States Supreme Court could mean the elimination of all remaining federally-protected subsistence fishing rights for Alaska Native people at a time of immediate critical need for the rural subsistence priority in times of shortage; and

WHEREAS: Subsistence fishing constitutes the majority of all subsistence foods taken by Alaska Native people, but is less than one percent of all fish caught in Alaska; and

WHEREAS: AFN has a broad and deep interest in protecting the food security, sovereignty, and Traditional Knowledge of Alaska Tribes, Alaska Native people, and their continued ability to practice traditional lifeways for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS: The State's refusal to protect and honor subsistence fishing practices has created extreme hardship for families and Native communities and a need for congressional intervention to protect Alaska Native fishing rights.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives will:

1. urge the federal government to aggressively protect our hunting and fishing rights in court; and
2. urge the White House and Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to utilize their full authority to protect Alaska Native subsistence families and communities; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon Congress to take immediate action to revisit and strengthen Title VIII of ANILCA in order to permanently protect the right of Alaska Native people to engage in subsistence fishing in Alaska's navigable waters and adequately fund efforts.

SUBMITTED BY: ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS AND COMBINED WITH SIMILAR
RESOLUTIONS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

SUBSISTENCE

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-02

- TITLE: REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA INCORPORATE INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE INTO DECISIONS MADE BY THE STATE OF ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES AND BOARD OF GAME
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The State of Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) and Board of Game (BOG) is responsible for the conservation and development of the state's fish and game resources; and
- WHEREAS: The BOF's role is to conserve and develop the fishery resources, including setting seasons, bag limits, methods, and means for the state's subsistence, commercial, sport, guided sport, and personal use fisheries, and setting policy and direction for the management of the state's fishery resources; and
- WHEREAS: The BOG's role is to conserve and develop Alaska's wildlife resources, including establishing open and closed seasons for hunting of game, areas for taking game, setting bag limits, and regulating methods and means; and
- WHEREAS: Both BOF and BOG are charged with making vital management and policy decisions and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is responsible for management based on those decisions from the BOG and BOF; and
- WHEREAS: Indigenous communities have lived in harmony with their environments for millennia, and Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge has been passed down through generations based on long-term observations, experiences, and adaptations, making it a valuable resource for sustainable management practices; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities are distinct and vary greatly and therefore have unique and specific information regarding the ecosystems they live in and steward; and
- WHEREAS: Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge can offer unique solutions to environmental challenges, including climate change and habitat degradation; and
- WHEREAS: The integration of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge into the decision-making processes of the BOF and BOG will not only enhance the State of Alaska's understanding of the State's ecosystems and the cultural significance of the natural resources that are part of those ecosystems but also promote justice, equity, and respect for Indigenous cultures.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby request the State of Alaska BOF and BOG to:

- Recognize the importance and value of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge in the management and conservation of Alaska's fish and game resources; and
- Commit to working with Alaska Native peoples to develop an equitable process for incorporating Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge into the decision-making processes of BOF and BOG; and
- Engage with Alaska Native communities, Alaska Native Corporations, Tribes, and Indigenous knowledge holders, including investing time and resources to build relationships with those entities and individuals, and respectfully seek their insights and expertise in the area of management and policy setting with regard to Alaska's natural resources; and
- Ensure that the integration of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge is done in a manner that respects the rights, traditions, and cultural values of Alaska Natives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the State of Alaska to prioritize and value the contributions of Alaska Natives in the sustainable management and conservation of the state's fish and game resources.

SUBMITTED BY: AFN SUBSISTENCE COMMITTEE

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-03

- TITLE: REQUESTING CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING FOR THE INCORPORATION OF INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IN DECISION MAKING
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge is a culmination of generational wisdom, practices, and understandings of ecosystems, passed down through millennia and deeply rooted in Indigenous cultures and identities; and
- WHEREAS: Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge offers invaluable insights into sustainable environmental management, biodiversity conservation, and the interconnectedness of nature, which can complement and enhance western science; and
- WHEREAS: Indigenous peoples, as keepers of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, can provide solutions to contemporary environmental challenges, including those posed by climate change; and
- WHEREAS: Native entities, being closely tied to their ancestral lands and waters, are uniquely positioned to research, compile, interpret, and apply Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, ensuring that it is approached with the respect, understanding, and cultural sensitivity it deserves; and
- WHEREAS: There is a lack of funding opportunities for Alaska Native communities to compile, research, and incorporate Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge into decision making bodies, such as the Federal Subsistence Management framework, Alaska Board of Fisheries, and Alaska Board of Game, which are charged with making vital management and policy decisions that affect our communities and traditional ways of life; and
- WHEREAS: Dedicated funding to support Native communities' efforts to research and compile Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and integrate that knowledge into a broader decision-making framework to enhance the

understanding of our ecosystems and the cultural significance of the natural resources but also promote justice, equity, and respect for Indigenous cultures.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the United States Congress to create funding opportunities for Alaska Native communities to compile Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge for the purposes of being incorporated into decision making entities to be on-par with western science that impacts our communities and traditional ways of life.

SUBMITTED BY: AFN SUBSISTENCE COMMITTEE

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-04

TITLE: CALLING FOR ALASKA BOARD OF GAME AND ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES TO ADD DESIGNATED VOTING SEATS FOR TRIBAL REPRESENTATION

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: Subsistence harvesting of wildlife and fish is essential to Our Way of Life, and is a critical food security concern and economic resource for our tribal communities; and

WHEREAS: The purpose of the Alaska Board of Fisheries is to conserve and develop the fisheries resources of the State of Alaska, with the authority to adopt regulations, including establishing open and closed seasons and areas for taking fish; setting quotas, bag limits, harvest levels and limitations for taking fish; and establishing the methods and means for the taking of fish; and

WHEREAS: The purpose of the Alaska Board of Game is to conserve and develop Alaska's wildlife resources, including establishing open and closed seasons, areas for taking game, setting bag limits, and regulating methods and means; and

WHEREAS: The wildlife and fish resources of the State face many threats, as evidenced by the significant and devastating decline of Western Alaska salmon stocks; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native Tribes have successfully and responsibly stewarded the wildlife and fish resources in Alaska since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS: The perspectives of Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge holders will increase the effectiveness of management decisions made by the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the Alaska Board of Game; and

WHEREAS: This increased effectiveness will preserve the wildlife and fish resources of the State of Alaska for the benefit of all Alaskans.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Alaska Federation of Natives calls for the Alaska State Legislature to immediately review and amend AS 16.05.221 to include at least one designated tribal voting seat on the Alaska Board of Game and one designated tribal voting seat on the Alaska Board of Fisheries; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Alaska Board of Game and Alaska Board of Fish designated tribal voting seats shall be filled from a list of nominated names

submitted by Tribal governments in Alaska.

SUBMITTED BY: ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS AMENDED

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-05

TITLE: SUPPORTING THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME MULCHATNA CARIBOU PREDATOR CONTROL PROGRAM, 2022-2028

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG) Mulchatna Caribou Predator Control Program, authorizing regulation for Units 9B, 17B, 17C, 18, 19A and 19B, 5 AAC 92.111, Intensive Management Plans I, contains detailed information about the predator control area established in GMUs 9B, 17B, 17C, 18, 19A and 19B, including delineation of the geographic area covered, background, status of the wildlife populations in question, objectives, and a management plan; and

WHEREAS: The Mulchatna Caribou Herd has been closed to hunting since the fall of 2021, the population has declined to 12,000 from 200,000, declining by 96% since 1997, and this herd is used to support 4,770 food security resources for Alaska communities yearly; and

WHEREAS: The value of the Mulchatna Caribou as a resource to our Region, the customary and traditional use, traditional knowledge, and historical meaning imbedded into our Yupik Culture, and that the Mulchatna herd has historically provided food for communities in Rural Alaska and helps provide a secure food resource for Alaskans; and

WHEREAS: Calving grounds need protection from bears and wolves to increase the population of the Mulchatna Caribou, and both bears and wolves have been identified by research as important factors causing low calf survival and potentially limiting the ability of the herd to increase; and

WHEREAS: Supporting the ADFG Mulchatna Predator Control Management Plan will rebuild the Mulchatna Caribou Herd population to allow our communities to once again provide hunting opportunities and allow for food security.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Alaska Federation of Natives supports the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Mulchatna Caribou Herd Predator Control Management.

SUBMITTED BY: ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-06

TITLE: A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES (AFN) RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE SAVE OUR SISTERS MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (MMIP) FEDERAL LEGISLATION

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: AFN recognizes the importance of improving communication and coordination between State and regional AMBER Alert networks and Tribal communities to better respond to cases of missing and murdered Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) persons; and

WHEREAS: AFN is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of its members, particularly its women and girls; and

WHEREAS: AFN supports the adoption of the Federal legislation titled the Save Our Sisters Act, which seeks to enhance communication and coordination between these networks and Tribal communities, mandate the creation of Tribal AMBER Alert Coordinator positions, and provide guidance and technical assistance to improve response times and ultimately save lives; and

WHEREAS: the Save Our Sisters Act also mandates the creation of a Tribal AMBER Alert Facilitator position, new guidelines for the use of DOT and FEMA National Weather Service alerts and authorizes appropriations necessary to carry out the provisions of the Act.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives stand together and are unified in our full endorsement of the Save Our Sisters Act and call upon the U.S. Congress to promptly pass and the U.S. President to sign this important Federal legislation into law, to ensure the safety and protection of AN/AI persons, particularly women and girls.

SUBMITTED BY: KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

Alaska Federation of Natives
2023 Annual Convention
Resolution 23-07

- TITLE:** A RESOLUTION REQUESTING AN INDEPENDENT FEDERAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE DISPROPORTIONATE PRISON DEATHS OF ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE HELD IN THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS CUSTODY
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** In 2022, Alaska Native people made up 22% of the state population yet accounted for 41.22% of Alaska’s incarcerated population; and
- WHEREAS:** In 2022, a record number of eighteen people died in Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) custody, half of whom were Alaska Native, and eight of nine from Alaska Native villages, and seven of these deaths were by suicide; and
- WHEREAS:** Not only are Alaska Natives disproportionately represented in Alaska’s incarcerated population, but Alaska Native people are dying in prison in even more disproportionate numbers; and
- WHEREAS:** People should not die in prison unless serving a life or equivalent sentence; and
- WHEREAS:** The current trend is of great concern and, therefore, should be investigated independently by a neutral entity to ensure objectivity and avoid any possible conflicts of interest; and
- WHEREAS:** The investigation should provide a thorough accounting of all deaths in custody, including causes of death, how each person’s health was assessed, conditions and circumstances of their confinement, and availability and delivery of healthcare prior to death; and
- WHEREAS:** The investigation should identify how these deaths in custody could have been prevented through both individual actions and systemic changes; and
- WHEREAS:** The investigation should identify whether language barriers or staff misconduct played a part in any of these deaths in custody; and

WHEREAS: The investigation should identify whether any of the people who died were eligible for, or had applied for, compassionate release or special medical parole and whether they were in pre-trial, remand, or sentenced status; and

WHEREAS: The investigators should make their report public to ensure transparency and accountability, so community members can work with state leaders to solve issues that contribute to deaths in custody.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives stand together and are unified in our efforts to advocate for fair and equitable treatment of Alaska Native people within the justice system; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives publicly support and call on the United States Attorney for Alaska to initiate an independent investigation of the deaths of Alaska Native prisoners who have died in the Department of Corrections custody.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-08

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA MANDATE THE ENTRY OF ALASKA NATIVE MISSING PERSON CASES IN THE NATIONAL MISSING AND UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS SYSTEM (NamUs)
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a national centralized repository and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States; and
- WHEREAS: NamUs provides technology, expertise, and resources to help investigators match long-term missing persons with unidentified remains to resolve cases and bring resolution to families and Tribes; and
- WHEREAS: Since it was established, NamUs has been used to resolve 358 Indigenous missing person cases and is currently supporting another 385 active, unsolved cases of missing Indigenous persons; and
- WHEREAS: At least nine states have passed legislation mandating that state law enforcement officials enter case information into NamUs; and
- WHEREAS: Tribal data fields were added to NamUs to support the increased collection of data related to missing Indigenous men and women, increased coordination and communication among law enforcement jurisdiction, and the efforts of Tribal governments to seek justice for families; and
- WHEREAS: The National Child Search Assistance Act mandates that every missing child reported to law enforcement be immediately entered into the National Crime Information Center, and there is currently no federal law requiring a law enforcement report be filed for anyone 21 years or older who goes missing; and
- WHEREAS: As of 2018, Alaska stood as the state with the 4th highest number of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls cases, with the city of Anchorage having the 3rd highest number of cases of all cities in the nation; and

WHEREAS: Criminal jurisdiction for Alaska as a Public Law 280 state results in concurrent overlaps of federal and state authority without overlapping resources and infrastructure.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives stand together to call on the State of Alaska to mandate the entry of Alaska Native missing person cases in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).

SUBMITTED BY: NATIVE VILLAGE OF AFOGNAK

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-09

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE FEDERAL FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME ALLOCATE FUNDING TO THE TRIBAL/VILLAGE POLICE OFFICER PROGRAMS IN EACH COMMUNITY FROM THEIR APPROPRIATED FUNDING TO HELP COMBAT BROAD VILLAGE SAFETY ISSUES
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Tribes and Tribal Organizations have a proven record of administering both federal and state funded programs and services to their tribal members; and
- WHEREAS: Article 1, Section 1, of the Alaska Constitution, which provides “this constitution is dedicated to the principles that all persons are equal and entitled to equal rights, opportunities, and protection under the law; and
- WHEREAS: The public safety crisis in rural and remote Alaska continues with some of the highest rates of domestic violence, sexual violence, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People cases in the Nation; and
- WHEREAS: In PL-280 States, such as Alaska, tribes do not receive Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) base funding for Public Safety and Justice (PSJ) programs; and
- WHEREAS: State law enforcement is largely absent in Alaska Native Villages, except for the most serious felonies; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska’s tribal governments and Tribal/Village Police Officers are on the front lines of protecting tribal communities in rural Alaska, but public safety and tribal justice infrastructure in Alaska has been under-funded, or unfunded, for decades; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Tribes have no sustained source of funding to recruit, hire, train, and retain officers; provide adequate equipment and supplies; or construct, renovate, or maintain public safety buildings, or holding cells; and

- WHEREAS: Alaska Tribes are forced to fund their own tribal safety and justice services through short-term/cyclical competitive grants, corporation donations, and fundraising through raffles, and other means; and
- WHEREAS: The State of Alaska has inadequately resourced the public safety system in rural Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: The State of Alaska is primarily responsible for ensuring public safety services are provided to villages in Rural/Remote Alaska through the Department of Public Safety (DPS); and
- WHEREAS: Tribes in Rural/Remote Alaska deserve the same resources, authority, and protections afforded to Tribes in the Lower 48 to provide law enforcement in their communities; and
- WHEREAS: In May 2018 the VPSO tribal contractors and the State of Alaska agreed on a strategy with components, of which the fourth component was: Ensuring adequate funding for all Public Safety Program needs; and
- WHEREAS: In recent years, drug trafficking, prescription drug abuse, and the resulting opioid, heroin, and methamphetamine epidemics have exponentially increased and plague Native Communities throughout Alaska, causing massive societal, emotional, and monetary damage to Alaska's Natives and their communities and causing countless injuries and death of many Native people, especially youth from addiction, overdose, and suicide; and
- WHEREAS: There is a significant lack of resources allocated for, education, preventative services, facilities, and public safety in Alaska's remote communities to address and resolve this drug epidemic which poses a direct threat to Alaska's Native youth; and
- WHEREAS: Federal, State, and local governments are called to make critical investments to address the needs of public safety in Alaska's remote communities to combat public safety issues; and
- WHEREAS: In 2019, United States Attorney General William P. Barr declared a law enforcement emergency in rural Alaska under the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Program recognizing that Alaska has the highest per capita Crime rate in the country and the unique circumstances of Alaska's geographic and jurisdictional landscape, the Attorney General William P. Barr authorized additional funding and several long-term measures to support village public safety which excluded funding for Tribal Police officers; and
- WHEREAS: During the 2019 Annual Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) Convention, delegates called on the Alaska State Legislature to respond to the emergency

federal declaration by declaring a corresponding state emergency and providing law enforcement in every community in Alaska (Resolution 19-2); and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska and the United States government have a responsibility to the people and remote communities of Alaska to take effective measures to ensure financial stability and support for Tribal Public Safety Programs; and

WHEREAS: The delegates of the 2022 Annual AFN Convention called for the Department of Interior to provide dedicated annual non-competitive base funding for PL-280 Tribes to develop and sustain tribal court systems, assist in the provision of public safety and related services, and assist with intergovernmental agreements (Resolution 22-7); and

WHEREAS: The President's 2023 budget for Fish and Wildlife Services totals \$3.7 billion, including current appropriations of \$2 billion, an increase of \$118 million above the 2022 enacted level; and

WHEREAS: The sustainability of human health, well-being, and life is of utmost importance to our society over the sustainability of wildlife and should take precedence over all things.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Department of Fish and Game to allocate a portion of at least 20 percent of their appropriated funds to public safety in rural and remote Alaska; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call on the Department of the Interior to appropriate 20 percent of Fish and Wildlife Service funds to create a non-competitive funding source and primarily fund remote communities in Alaska to combat public safety issues.

SUBMITTED BY: ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-10

TITLE: INCORPORATING THE DEFINITION OF “VILLAGE” IN THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2022 IN RELATED PUBLIC SAFETY STATUTES AND GRANT PROGRAMS

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The safety and well-being of all people within rural Alaska Native villages is of paramount importance, and addressing issues related to violence against women is a critical component of ensuring public safety in rural Alaska Native communities; and

WHEREAS: Congress has recognized that Alaska Native women—are overrepresented in the domestic violence victim population by 250 percent; and the State of Alaska comprises: Alaska Natives make 19 percent of the population of the State; but 47 percent of reported rape victims in the State; and as compared to the populations of other Indian Tribes, suffer the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence; and

WHEREAS: In VAWA 2022, Congress recognized and affirmed the inherent authority of any Indian tribe occupying a Village in the State of Alaska to exercise criminal and civil jurisdiction over all Indians present in the Village; and

WHEREAS: the definition of Village in VAWA 2022 clarifies how federal criminal jurisdiction and tribal jurisdiction intersect in Alaska; and

WHEREAS: This definition of Village should be included in additional federal tribal public safety statutes, regulations, policies, implementation strategies, grant programs, protections, and resources; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities are denied access to vital public safety authorities and funding because of ongoing confusion about P.L. 280 and Alaska’s unique legal landscape; and

WHEREAS: Including the definition of Village will ensure greater protection, opportunity, and clarity of responsibility in addressing issues related to violence against women in Alaska; and

WHEREAS: This unified definition aligns with respecting Alaska Tribes and the unique needs of Alaska Native communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge Congress and the Executive Branch to incorporate the definition of "Village" as provided in VAWA 2022 into all public safety statutes, regulations, policies, and implementation strategies.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS AMENDED

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-11

TITLE: SUPPORT INCREASE FOR NAHASDA AND THE INDIAN HOUSING BLOCK GRANT (IHBG)

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: for over 20 years, congress has under-funded Native housing programs compared to non-Native housing; and

WHEREAS: In 2001, HUD's overall budget was \$26BB while the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) was funded at \$646MM (2.5% of HUD's overall budget), and in 2023, HUD's overall budget has increased by 171% to \$70BB (+58% inflation-adjusted) and the IHBG was increased by 21.8% to \$787MM (-29% inflation-adjusted); and

WHEREAS: Congress has increased the IHBG in the past two fiscal years, however, to just keep pace with inflation, the IHBG would be \$1.1BB in FY 2023; and

WHEREAS: In the FY 2024 draft House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill, the IHBG is proposed to be funded at \$1.11BB, and the Senate THUD bill has the IHBG proposed to be funded at \$848MM; and

WHEREAS: Increasing the IHBG now will help alleviate the urgent housing crisis we are seeing across our communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge Congress to fund the Indian Housing Block Grant at an amount no less than the FY 2024 House proposed amount of \$1.11BB; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge Congress to continue to increase the Indian Housing Block Grant every year at an amount no less than the factor of inflation.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-12

TITLE: A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL S. 2285, "A BILL TO REAUTHORIZE THE NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING AND SELF-DETERMINATION ACT OF 1996"

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: Affordable housing is in critically short supply in our region, causing individuals, families, and employers to move away permanently, and causing a host of social ills for the families that remain in the overcrowded residences; and

WHEREAS: Funding under NAHASDA programs is the main source of federal assistance to ensure American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians have access to safe, accessible, and affordable housing; and

WHEREAS: NAHASDA, which became effective in October 1997, provides tribes with a consistent, dedicated annual funding stream without requiring them to navigate the myriad of general housing programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). NAHASDA recognizes tribal sovereignty and self-determination by providing block grant funds directly to tribes, which are operated pursuant to tribally created Indian Housing Plan; and

WHEREAS: On July 12, 2023, Senate Bill S. 2285 was introduced and is sponsored by U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski, Brian Schatz, John Hoeven, and Jon Tester.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the swift passage of this vital bi-partisan bill.

SUBMITTED BY: BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-13

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CULLING OF THE BARRIER CRIMES LIST TO GIVE HOPE AND REDEMPTION
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Organizations such as the Bristol Bay Native Association support the State of Alaska’s efforts to keep children safe, to keep elders safe, to keep feeble persons safe; and to keep violent predators away from places where families trust that those vulnerable persons will be protected and cared for; and
- WHEREAS: Seven Alaska Administrative Code Section 10.905, paragraph “a,” states that: “A barrier crime or condition is a criminal offense or civil finding that prohibits a provider or an applicant from being approved under 7 AAC 10.900”; and
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services publishes via the internet a guidance document titled: “Barrier Crimes Matrix for the Barrier Crimes Listed in 7 AAC 10.905”; and
- WHEREAS: The Matrix is extensive, advising permanent, ten, five and three-year barriers to hiring for an extensive list of crimes; and
- WHEREAS: After a person has served his time, fulfilled his debt to society, some of the offenses on the list might bear little relation to protecting the public, but just act as further punishment; and
- WHEREAS: Criminal records follow a person electronically, are difficult to seal or expunge in Alaska, even for a person who has been punished, done his penance, and for years has persisted in hard work and clean living; and
- WHEREAS: Organizations such as the Bristol Bay Native Association believe some hope and opportunity should be offered to former offenders who have done their penance and if given a chance will rebuild their lives and families; and
- WHEREAS: Organizations such as the Bristol Bay Native Association believe such persons can be an inspiration to others in our communities who have lost their way.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the State of Alaska to take a hard look at the extensive list of barrier crimes and winnow them down, with an eye to the protection of children, the elderly, and the infirm, but also with an eye to punishment, penance, and hope for offenders who have changed their ways.

SUBMITTED BY: BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

EDUCATION

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-14

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER’S (ANHC) LACH’QU SUKDU RESEARCH PROGRAM AS A PLACE FOR ALASKA NATIVES TO RECEIVE AND DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION CONCERNING ALASKA BOARDING SCHOOLS TO ENSURE INCREASED ACCESS TO INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND THE STRENGTHENING OF ALASKA NATIVE CULTURAL IDENTITY AND HEALING THROUGH AWARENESS
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native peoples have a unique and rich cultural heritage that deserves to be celebrated, preserved, and shared; and
- WHEREAS: The state of Alaska was home to over 100 assimilative boarding schools run by ecclesial and federal entities meant to dissolve Alaska Native cultures, economies, and political voices; and
- WHEREAS: The United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) states these institutions committed Cultural Genocide against Indigenous peoples; and
- WHEREAS: The Department of the Interior’s Boarding School Initiative and forthcoming congressional legislation establishing the Truth and Healing Commission have been significant steps taken by the federal government for the sake of telling this history; and
- WHEREAS: The role of the boarding schools in Alaska has been up until recently ignored; and
- WHEREAS: Virtually all Alaska Native peoples have been affected by these assimilative boarding schools; and
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Native Heritage Center has gained access to primary resources previously unknown to the public, highlighting the central role of Alaska in the structure of these assimilative institutions, which influenced events throughout the world, including Canada; and

WHEREAS: These primary source materials also shed light on how issues such as resource extraction and restriction to traditional subsistence practices were key to the assimilative goals of these institutions, which still affect Alaska Native peoples to this day; and

WHEREAS: Research has shown the generational effects of the boarding schools in both areas of trauma and structural violence, where information concerning these parts of our history has proven to promote healing within these Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS: ANHC's research concerning the assimilative boarding schools in Alaska has the potential to strengthen understanding and create healing opportunities throughout Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Increased recognition of the history and impacts of the assimilative boarding schools in Alaska will create much-needed healing while also allowing Alaska Natives across the state to preserve their history, tell their own stories, promote heritage preservation, and create a better history for the next generation.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual AFN Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recognize the significance of boarding school history in Alaska, its effects upon all Alaska Native peoples, and its importance in creating a better future for future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives express our strong support for the Alaska Native Heritage Center's Lach'qu Sukdu Research Program's commitment to being a place for Alaska Natives to receive and distribute information concerning the assimilative boarding schools within the state of Alaska through the Alaska Federation of Natives to ensure increased access to information, education, and the strengthening of Alaska Native cultural identities and healing through the dispersion of ANHC's research, as the first step to healing is understanding the truth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives encourage state and federal government bodies, as well as private and nonprofit organizations, to get in contact with the Alaska Native Heritage Center if they are in possession of boarding school primary source material or cultural items taken during the boarding school era; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon all stakeholders to collaborate in the efforts with the Alaska Native Heritage Center to expand not only awareness concerning this important point in history that affects all of us here today, but to ensure that this

information be widely accessible, unified, and beneficial to the healing of Alaska's diverse communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives pledge to work closely with Alaska Native groups, tribal entities, federal and ecclesial institutions, and relevant stakeholders to advocate so that our stories are told and remain committed to celebrating Alaska's cultural diversity, preserving its heritage, bringing healing to all Alaska Native peoples; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution shall be distributed to all relevant state and federal authorities, organizations, ecclesial entities, and individuals to raise awareness concerning the assimilative boarding schools in Alaska.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

LAND, ENERGY, & NATURAL RESOURCES

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-15

- TITLE: AMENDING PL LAW 116-09 ON LAND FOR NATIVE ALLOTMENTS OF THE VIETNAM WAR VETERANS AND QUALIFIED HEIRS OF THE VIETNAM WAR VETERAN
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The United States Congress overwhelmingly passed S. 47 in February of 2019; and
- WHEREAS: John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation Management and Recreation Act was enacted into law on March 12, 2019; and
- WHEREAS: PL 116-09 authorized the qualified Alaska Native Veterans/heirs of the Vietnam War to apply for Native Allotments; and
- WHEREAS: PL 116-09 states that certain conservation system lands such as Wildlife Refuge lands and other lands may be made available as lands for the Alaska Native Veterans of the Vietnam War or their heirs; and
- WHEREAS: Some Alaska Native Veterans of the Vietnam War and some heirs of the veterans met with the Honorable Interior Secretary Deb Haaland at her request on November 2, 2021, and the main objective of the meeting with the Secretary was to get a very strong commitment of support from the Secretary of the Interior on the Native Allotment land issue for the Alaska Native veterans of the Vietnam/Vietnam War Era and the heirs of the fallen warriors; and
- WHEREAS: Some Alaska Native veterans met with the Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs and Alaska's Congressional Delegation members, the Honorable U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, the Honorable U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan, and the Honorable U.S. Representative Mary Peltola, on February 24, 2023, at the VA Clinic, and sought their support in expanding the land base for Native Allotments; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Alaska Federation of Natives Convention request Alaska's Congressional Delegation consider affirmatively amending PL 116-09 as follows:

1. Incorporate the Congressionally recognized dates of the Vietnam War, as "The period beginning on February 28, 1971, and ending on May 7, 1975; and
2. Extend the application period by at least ten years; and
3. To avoid claim denials that state that veterans' selected lands that have already been taken, it is important to expand the land base by mandating certain lands such as wildlife refuge lands, lands that were Sections 17(d)(1) and 17(d)(2) of the National Interest Lands Provision of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of December 18, 1971, and unselected ANCSA land withdrawals under Section 11 to be made available as Native Allotment selections.
4. Authorize the Alaska Natives of the Vietnam War with Service-Connected Disabilities by a Congressional mandate to be allowed to apply for Allotments close to their homes; and
5. Amend the present law such that the veterans/heirs who applied for Native Allotments exchange their Allotments for lands close to their homes; and
6. If land is not available, other forms, including monetary equivalent, be authorized by Congress.

SUBMITTED BY: ALASKA NATIVE VETERANS COUNCIL AND ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
VETERANS COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-16

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEAN LANDS AND WATERS
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: AFN understands that our Traditional ways of life rely on the fish, plants, animals, and natural resources of Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: AFN understands the responsibility that all Alaska Native People recognize that we are stewards of our traditional lands, and that preventing future harms to our environment and halting current harms to our environment is critical to protecting the cultural, nutritional, economic, and spiritual wellbeing of all Alaska Native Peoples; and
- WHEREAS: AFN recognizes a current harm exists in the Cook Inlet and that the Municipality has applied for an extension of its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit waiver for their wastewater treatment plant, which would allow for the continued discharge of treated sewage into the waters of Cook Inlet averaging 7.5 million gallons per day; and
- WHEREAS: AFN asserts that the proposed discharge of such a significant volume of lightly treated sewage into Cook Inlet has the potential to harm the delicate ecosystem that is so essential to our way of life, including the salmon and other fish populations that provide food, cultural, and economic benefits to our community; and
- WHEREAS: AFN recognizes that the Municipality has not been in compliance with current water treatment standards for over 30 years, and a renewal of this NPDES waiver would allow Anchorage to continue operating its water treatment facilities without meeting these standards for wastewater treatment and discharge; and
- WHEREAS: AFN has a responsibility to protect and preserve the health of its natural resources for present and future generations, and that the discharge of inadequately treated wastewater poses risks to the health of our people who rely on those resources; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives stand together and are unified in opposition of EPA extensions for water treatment waivers for urban municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recognize the need to protect our lands and waters and call upon the EPA to uphold their responsibility to protect the environment and public health and to enforce current standards for the treatment and discharge of wastewater; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives will continue to monitor and advocate for the protection of its natural resources, including the health of its water resources, and will take necessary actions to ensure that these resources are available for future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives will ensure that this Resolution shall be widely disseminated to the EPA and other relevant parties and shall serve as the Convention's official position on this matter.

SUBMITTED BY: KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS AMENDED
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-17

TITLE: URGING CONGRESS TO RESTORE LANDS CONVEYED UNDER THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT 14(C)(3) PROVISION

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was enacted by the United States Congress in 1971 to resolve the land claims of Alaska Native peoples; and

WHEREAS: Section 14(c)(3) of ANCSA required every Native Village Corporation to convey a portion of the lands it received to the State of Alaska to be held in trust for the eventual creation of a municipal government in the community without recognition of Tribal Councils; and

WHEREAS: There were originally 101 villages covered by the 14 (c) State Municipal Land Trust (MLT) program, and according to the State of Alaska, a total of eight villages have been incorporated into a municipality, the last one in 1995; and

WHEREAS: This leaves 83 communities that are still covered under the MLT program, with approximately 11,500 acres currently held in trust by the State; and

WHEREAS: These lands are now being managed in apparent perpetuity by the State Municipal Land Trust (MLT), an office that is underfunded and overtasked and reluctant to accept lands for certain municipal functions such as community landfills; and

WHEREAS: The 14(c)(3) provision was drafted over 50 years ago and now leads to significant and detrimental impacts on the ability of Alaska Native corporations and communities to engage in economic development activities and utilize their lands to their fullest potential; and

WHEREAS: The underfunding and overtasking of the MLT office has created unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and obstacles, hindering the economic self-determination and self-sufficiency of Alaska Native people; and

WHEREAS: Removing the 14(c)(3) provision will empower Alaska Native corporations and communities to make informed decisions about how to best utilize their lands and resources, leading to greater economic prosperity and self-sufficiency.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request Congress to support the economic empowerment and self-sufficiency of Alaska Native people by supporting efforts to sunset and the ANCSA 14(c)(3) provision and revert lands held in the MLT program to our Alaska Native Village Corporations.

SUBMITTED BY: BAAN O YEEL KON CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS AMENDED

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-18

TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA TO INVESTIGATE THE OPERATIONS OF THE REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA (RCA) THAT CAUSE RURAL ALASKA RESIDENTS UNDUE FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS THAT AFFECT THEIR ABILITY TO THRIVE

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The public energy crisis in rural and remote Alaska continues with some of the highest costs in the country with isolated energy grids highly dependent on outside fossil fuel costs with the added built-in expense of transportation to remote places that experience extreme weather conditions; and

WHEREAS: Residents of rural Alaska already face enough unprecedented challenges to living in their remote homelands in the face of the effects of climate change, and a higher-than-average cost of living; and

WHEREAS: Rural households spend 27% of their annual income on home energy, compared to less than 7% in urban Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Entities that do not receive a subsidy through the State of Alaska's Power Cost Equalization (PCE) program are disproportionately affected by the prohibitively high cost of electricity; and

WHEREAS: In one recent example, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) allowed Aniak Light & Power to recover the under-recovered fuel costs by amortizing \$491,145 on ratepayers in Aniak over a 24-month period; and

WHEREAS: The financial burden on Aniak ratepayers was not ameliorated through the two-year amortization plan; and

WHEREAS: A substantial rate increase caused by a utility's Cost of Power Adjustment (COPA) would be of significant interest to the public and thus, necessitate public notice under 3 AAC 52.504(d), but, in this situation, no such notice was given; and

WHEREAS: Three of the five RCA commissioners lack qualification under AS 42.04.020(a), which requires commissioners to be members of the Alaska Bar Association, or else have a degree in engineering, finance, economics, accounting, business administration, or public administration, or else five years' experience in those fields; and

WHEREAS: There is currently no statutory requisite for any RCA commissioner to be an Alaska Native tribal member.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual AFN Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request that the RCA be required to give public notice under AS 42.05.411 of changes to utility COPAs that would result in a 10% or greater rate increase; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual AFN Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the Alaska State Legislature to investigate the fitness of the RCA commissioners to carry out their statutory duties; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual AFN Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the Alaska State Legislature amend AS 42.04.020(a) to codify that at least one of the RCA's five commissioners be an Alaska Native tribal member in order to better represent the unique needs of Tribal and rural communities and requests the RCA hire additional staff and dedicate resources to continually train them to be better equipped to work with rural communities and utilities.

SUBMITTED BY: ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-19

- TITLE:** SUPPORTING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP LEGISLATION FOR ELECTRONICS RECYCLING AND REMOVAL FROM COMMUNITY LANDFILLS
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The proliferation of electronic devices in our society has led to a significant increase in electronic waste (e-waste), posing a growing environmental and public health concern; and
- WHEREAS:** E-waste contains hazardous materials such as lead, mercury, and cadmium that can leach into soil and water sources, and emit into the air when burned, posing a serious threat to the environment and public health when improperly disposed of; and
- WHEREAS:** The heavy plastic encasing electronics, when crushed and burned in landfills, emit cancer-causing dioxins into the air, posing a serious threat to public health and the environment; and
- WHEREAS:** Most rural Alaska Native communities have smaller, Class III landfills, which are unlined, unregulated, and burn trash to reduce mass, therefore allowing more of the harmful electronic toxins into the environment when crushed and burned; and
- WHEREAS:** The safe and responsible management of electronics is essential to protect our environment, conserve valuable resources, and reduce the carbon footprint associated with electronic products; and
- WHEREAS:** 25 other states and many other countries have recognized the importance of addressing e-waste through the implementation of product stewardship programs, which shift the responsibility for the proper recycling and end-disposal of e-waste from consumers to the manufacturers of electronic devices; and
- WHEREAS:** Product stewardship legislation for electronics has proven to be an effective and sustainable approach in over 25 states, helping to divert e-waste from landfills,

promote recycling, and reduce the harmful environmental impacts associated with improper disposal; and

WHEREAS: By introducing product stewardship legislation for e-waste, communities can incentivize manufacturers to design products with greater consideration for their end-of-life management, encourage the responsible recycling and disposal of e-waste, and reduce the financial burden on local governments and taxpayers for e-waste management.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the Alaska State Legislature to introduce and pass comprehensive product stewardship legislation for e-waste in Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the AFN Legislative and Litigation Committee assist in drafting product steward legislation that is specific to rural Alaska to ensure that manufacturers' responsibility for the collection and proper recycling and disposal of their electronic products is not passed on to communities and that this legislation require and promote public awareness and education about the importance of recycling e-waste.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-20

TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING THE U.S. SENATE AND THE U.S. CONGRESS TO PASS THE NATIONAL SEAFOOD SUPPLY ACT OF 2023

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: For thousands of years, our fishing practices have been at the core of who we are economically, culturally, spiritually; and

WHEREAS: On June 22, 2023, U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan introduced Senate Bill No. 2208, titled, “National Seafood Supply Act of 2023”; and

WHEREAS: As told by Senator Sullivan: The bill is a “comprehensive legislative package to elevate the priorities of fishermen and the seafood industry within the USDA. These provisions will give fishermen access to USDA farm loans, establish an Office of Seafood tasked with coordinating seafood policies and programs at the USDA and across federal agencies, focus taxpayer dollars in the National School Lunch Program on U.S.-harvested seafood, foster greater food security in rural communities, and ensure fair labeling of foreign-sourced seafood products”; and

WHEREAS: This legislation will strengthen the economy, fishing culture, and, therefore, our communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge Congress to speedily consider and pass this important legislation.

SUBMITTED BY: BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ECONOMIC

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-21

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF AN INDIGENOUS TOURISM ORGANIZATION IN ALASKA TO ENSURE THAT ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE ARE RECOGNIZED LEADERS IN BUILDING CULTURAL TOURISM CAPACITY THROUGHOUT ALASKA
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The state of Alaska boasts a rich and diverse cultural heritage that is integral to its identity and history; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native peoples have a unique and rich cultural heritage that deserves to be celebrated, preserved, and shared with all Alaskans and visitors; and
- WHEREAS: “Cultural Tourism” is a way to educate about traditional Alaska Native knowledge and ways of life and perpetuates our Alaska Native cultures; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska is home to more than 100 Cultural Tourism businesses, including many Alaska Native-led cultural centers, tours and excursions, guiding businesses, gift shops, hotels, and more; and
- WHEREAS: Cultural Tourism in Alaska promotes cultural exchange, economic growth, and cross-cultural understanding across Alaska and beyond; and
- WHEREAS: Cultural Tourism in Alaska plays a pivotal role in celebrating and preserving Alaska's unique cultures and traditions while contributing significantly to the state's economy; and
- WHEREAS: Cultural Tourism initiatives in Alaska have the potential to strengthen local economies, create jobs, and enhance community development throughout Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: Cultural Tourism capacity development should be a strategic priority for all Alaska tourism interest groups; and

WHEREAS: Increased funding for Cultural Tourism capacity will create much-needed jobs while also allowing Alaska Natives across the state to preserve their history, tell their own stories, promote heritage preservation, and offer immersive cultural experiences for residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS: Today, Alaska's visitor industry is the state's second-largest private sector employer, supporting one in 10 jobs. In 2019, more than 2.25 million visitors came to Alaska, resulting in more than \$2.7 billion in direct visitor spending and \$4 billion in total economic activity for the state; and

WHEREAS: 51% of travelers to Alaska participated in some kind of cultural activity; however, there is no state funding allocated to increasing Cultural Tourism capacity in rural or urban Alaska; and

WHEREAS: There is a critical need for the development and enhancement of Alaska's Cultural Tourism industry and to ensure that there is an organization in place to designate and certify to the public that Cultural Tourism is Alaska Native-led.

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED that the Delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby express our strong support for the creation of an Indigenous Tourism Organization to ensure increased funding and resources are dedicated to enhancing cultural tourism capacity in the State of Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives encourage state and federal government bodies, as well as private and nonprofit organizations, to allocate additional funds and resources toward the development, promotion, and sustainability of cultural tourism initiatives in Alaska, and call upon all stakeholders to collaborate in the efforts to expand cultural tourism opportunities, ensuring that they are accessible, respectful, and beneficial to Alaska's diverse communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention support the creation of a statewide initiative creating a certification and brand ensuring that Cultural Tourism vendors and organizations are Alaska Native-led. The purpose of this certification and brand is to ensure that Cultural Tourism involving Alaska Native heritage is led by Alaska Native people; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention request a Governor's Conference be convened before the 2024 tourism season to focus on Cultural Tourism and that the Governor's Conference work cooperatively with Tribal Cultural Tourism stakeholders in developing the agenda and action items for the Governor's Conference.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

ANCSA/TRIBAL

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-22

- TITLE: ADVOCATING FOR INCREASED INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL ALASKA TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALASKA NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS AND ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Lack of fully-funded infrastructure left many Alaska Native communities without reliable and affordable energy, running water, internet connectivity, and roads; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities have been advocating for generations for fully-funded infrastructure investments; and
- WHEREAS: The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act creates a historic investment in Indigenous communities across the country and Alaska Native communities that signifies a re-envisioned future committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of Alaska Native People, Elders, and future generations; and
- WHEREAS: This historic investment seeks to deliver climate resiliency, reliable, clean, and affordable power, affordable, high-speed internet, safe roads and bridges, ports and barge landings, ice roads, boardwalks, modern wastewater systems, and clean drinking water to rural communities throughout the country; and
- WHEREAS: Consultation of Alaska Native people should always occur before policies are developed to ensure that decisions are grounded in Traditional knowledge, shared heritage, and with the understanding that Tribal leaders know how to best help their people and communities; and
- WHEREAS: Funding opportunities should be designed in a way that prioritizes learning directly from the people whose communities it is intended to benefit and focuses on enhancing the ability of rural Alaska communities to develop, grow, and improve their quality of life; and
- WHEREAS: There are universal challenges for Alaska Native organizations and Alaska Native Tribes to access funding opportunities due to an incoherent grant methodology

and system across federal agencies, we are requesting that there is a centralized Tribal grant system to administer federal funding sources; and

WHEREAS: Regional comprehensive infrastructure planning for Alaska Native and Indigenous entities is necessary for meaningful participation in these funding opportunities with the lack of data around infrastructure in Alaska Native and Indigenous communities, and there needs to be Traditional Knowledge training and technical support to better understand and serve Alaska Native and Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native Corporations, Alaska Native organizations, and Tribal projects should be prioritized over non-Indigenous, for-profit entities' projects; and

WHEREAS: It is vital to eliminate barriers from federal grants, such as burdensome cost-matching requirements that harm the self-determination of Alaska Native organizations and Alaska Native Tribes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that the Alaska Federation of Natives supports its Alaska Native Tribes' requests that all funding entities align their programs to account for the economic realities facing Alaska Native organizations and Alaska Native Tribes—for example, much of rural Alaska lacks the economic infrastructure to meet current federal grant funding cost-matching formulas—and that state, federal, and other entities increase current investment into rural Alaska to achieve parity with urban areas in Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon local, state, and federal entities to dedicate resources for infrastructure comprehensive planning and data collection—including Traditional and local knowledge and consultation—necessary to implement infrastructure in rural Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives support the request for federal funding applicants to consult and receive consent from Alaska Native landowners prior to award; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives advocate that Alaska Native Corporations, Alaska Native organizations, and Tribal projects must be prioritized over non-Indigenous, for-profit entity projects.

SUBMITTED BY: CALISTA CORPORATION AND THE KUSKOKWIM CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS AMENDED

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-23

- TITLE: OPPOSING CHANGES IN DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR POLICY FOR FEDERAL RECOGNITION OF ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES AND REQUESTING THAT THE ALASKA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION OF ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES SEEKING TRIBAL RECOGNITION
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Congress, in the Alaska amendment to the Indian Reorganization Act (Alaska IRA), authorized the Department of the Interior to organize and thereafter federally recognize groups of Alaska Natives that have not been previously "recognized as bands or tribes, but having a common bond of occupation, or association, or residence within a well-defined neighborhood, community, or rural district"; and
- WHEREAS: The Department of the Interior has since 1936 relied on its authority under the Alaska IRA to determine which groups of Alaska Natives are eligible for organization and recognition, thereby establishing a body of administrative precedent; and
- WHEREAS: The Department of the Interior has stated that at least 38 Alaska Native groups have received Charters under the Alaska IRA; and
- WHEREAS: The Department of Interior made clear when it published the original Federal Acknowledgment Procedures in 1978 (now codified at 25 C.F.R. Part 83) that those would not apply to Alaska IRA-eligible groups; and
- WHEREAS: In publishing its revised Federal Acknowledgment Procedures in 2015, the Department of Interior clarified that those procedures applied to groups with the contiguous United States, but that in Alaska, groups of Alaska Natives meeting the common bond standard could be recognized pursuant to the authority of the Department of the Interior under the Alaska IRA; and

WHEREAS: In February 2023, the Department, without consultation or public comment, issued new federal recognition guidance for Alaska tribes that departs from the common bond standard of the Alaska IRA and from the Department's own practices and precedent; and

WHEREAS: The February 2023 guidance incorporates many of the evidentiary criteria from the 25 C.F.R. Part 83 Federal Acknowledgment Procedures that the Department of the Interior has previously deemed inapplicable to groups in Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Several groups of Alaska Natives who have submitted requests to the Department of the Interior for organization and recognition under the Alaska IRA have been unfairly prejudiced by the change in Department policy; and

WHEREAS: Other groups of Alaska Natives have been deterred in applying for tribal recognition under the Alaska IRA process because of the onerous and costly requirements; and

WHEREAS: The Department has for many years made assurances to Members of Congress that the Department of the Interior will issue decisions on several pending recognition requests, but it has failed to do so; and

WHEREAS: The 2023 change in Department policy has undermined the common bond standard Congress intended for recognition of groups of Alaska Natives and made it necessary for Alaska Native tribes to go to Congress to obtain federal recognition.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives convey to the Department of the Interior and to Alaska's Congressional Delegation that AFN supports and urges the enactment of legislation that provides for Congressional recognition of Alaska Native tribes seeking federal recognition; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recommend that the Alaska Congressional Delegation request that the Department of the Interior revise its February 2023 guidance to conform to Department practice and precedent under the Alaska IRA.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-24

TITLE: DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS TRIBAL CONTRACTING AND SELF-GOVERNANCE COMPACTING FUNDING LEVELS MUST CONSIDER INFLATION

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: Federally recognized tribes provide basic government functions in Alaska Native communities through self-governance contracts and compacts authorized by the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS: Seventy percent of Alaska’s 210 small and needy tribes, located in 147 communities, are not on the road system; and

WHEREAS: Tribal governments are significantly underfunded for base operations, and the cost of broadband, energy, electricity, and transportation are significantly higher in rural communities and have dramatically increased in the last 20 years; and

WHEREAS: The cost of living in Alaska communities ranges from 26 percent higher in Anchorage than the lower 48 to up to 50% in Bethel; and

WHEREAS: BIA Tribal Allocation Priority (TPA) dollars are critical in Alaska, and there have been no corresponding increases in the TPA budget allocations; and

WHEREAS: BIA TPA funds constitute core funding around which vital tribal services revolve, and it must keep up with current inflation and the cost of providing services.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives strongly urge the Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs to conduct a market basket survey of the cost of living in Alaska communities annually, ensuring Alaska tribes receive the same amount of base funding in comparison to lower 48 tribes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to release guidance for Federal agencies to adjust programs, benefits, and how to apply inflation adjustments for Tribal communities and communicate those inflation adjustments to the public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives strongly recommend the Department of Interior Tribal compacts and contracts be equally adjusted to reflect inflation and the cost of providing services.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

OTHER

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-25

- TITLE: SUPPORT FOR ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: For over 50 years, Alaska Legal Services Corporation (ALSC) has ensured fairness for all in the justice system by providing access to free civil legal help for Alaskans who cannot afford it; and WHEREAS: civil legal aid protects the livelihood, health, and safety of Alaskans and helps them to avoid eviction, illegal dismissal from employment, domestic violence, and denial of healthcare and lawful benefits; and
- WHEREAS: Civil legal aid protects the livelihood, health, and safety of Alaskans and helps them to avoid eviction, illegal dismissal from employment, domestic violence, and denial of healthcare and lawful benefits; and
- WHEREAS: ALSC's lawyers in eleven offices around the state serve a population of over 108,650 Alaskans living below 125% of the poverty threshold, including more than 31,600 Alaska Natives; and ALSC's lawyers in twelve offices and medical-legal partnership sites embedded within tribal healthcare facilities around the state serve a population of 131,270 Alaskans living below 125% of the poverty threshold, including more than 31,504 Alaska Natives; and
- WHEREAS: ALSC has been a strong ally of the Alaska Native community through landmark court cases such as *Alvarado v. State*, *Carle v. Carle*, *Aguchak v. Montgomery Ward*, *Allakaket v. Hickel*, *John v. Baker*; *State v. Native Village of Tanana*, *Simmonds v. Parks*, *Native Village of Tununak v. State of Alaska*, *State of Alaska v. Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*, *Akiakchak Native Community v. U.S. Department of the Interior*; and
- WHEREAS: Several regional nonprofits including: Bristol Bay Native Association, Association of Village Council Presidents, the Tanana Chiefs Conference and Maniilaq Association partner with ALSC to support local ALSC offices and staff in the communities of Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Nome and Kotzebue; and
- WHEREAS: Several regional for-profits have provided significant financial and in-kind

support to ALSC's regional offices: including Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, CIRI, Inc. Bering Straits Native Corporation, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, Doyon, Ltd, and the Sitnasuak Native Corporation; and

WHEREAS: Several tribal governments, including the Central Council of Tlingit-Haida Indian tribes of Alaska, the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, the Inupiaq Community of the Arctic Slope, the Nome Eskimo Community, and Orutsararmiut Native Council have also provided financial support for and partnered with ALSC; and

WHEREAS: Since 1984, when ALSC received an appropriation from the state of Alaska of \$1.2 Million to serve a population of 41,000 people eligible for ALSC's services, the number of Alaskans eligible for ALSC's help has more than doubled, yet the state's current contribution to ALSC is less than what it was 39 years ago; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska did make an appropriation to ALSC for fiscal year (SFY) 2024 in the amount of \$751,000, which is far less than what is needed to assure that all Alaskans have access to equal justice, and it is unclear whether this will be sustained in future fiscal years; and

WHEREAS: The vast majority of ALSC's cases involve the basic human necessities of family safety, shelter, food, access to medical care, and income maintenance; and

WHEREAS: A 2017 report by the Alaska Court System Access to Justice Committee estimates that an individual Alaskan experiences 2.1 legal issues every eighteen months, and ALSC's current funding levels only stretch far enough to help about 7,315 people living in over 200 communities each year; and

WHEREAS: ALSC must turn away over half of the qualified individuals each year with critical legal needs due to its limited resources; and

WHEREAS: Every additional \$100,000 of funding enables ALSC to directly benefit 182 more people.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the Governor of Alaska to retain the appropriation for ALSC in his proposed State FY25 budget and urges the Alaska Legislature to appropriate that funding and urge Congress to award sufficient funding to the federal Legal Services Corporation to support Alaska Legal Services Corporation's mission of providing free legal services on vital issues to low-income Alaskans.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-26

TITLE: ENDORSING PRESERVATION OF ALASKA’S OPEN PRIMARY AND RANKED CHOICE VOTING ELECTION SYSTEM

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: One in five Alaskans is of Native descent, and six in 10 Alaskans are nonpartisan; and

WHEREAS: Most Alaska Natives are frequently asked to vote—in local, regional, tribal, and corporate elections. Navigating ballots and proxies is a way of life; and

WHEREAS: The open primary and ranked choice voting system provides more opportunities for Alaska Natives to run for public office and get elected; and

WHEREAS: Current law allows for more freedom, more choice, more influence, and greater participation among Alaskans, decentralizing power and empowering voters; and

WHEREAS: The open primary election system had been in effect in Alaska for decades until the year 2000, when Alaska conducted a party-rule ballot primary; and

WHEREAS: Alaskans in 2020 voted to pass Ballot Measure 2, which created the open primary and ranked choice voting system and gave all Alaskans more choice in their representation and a greater voice in their government; and

WHEREAS: Given the polarization in the country, Alaskans cannot afford to merely preserve this current voting law but must lead the nationwide movement to restore commonsense governance, restore confidence in our electoral system, and create a lane that allows politicians to become public servants; and

WHEREAS: Alaskans should be able to choose a person, not a political party, and trust that the process will encourage good public policy, not extreme partisanship.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby express our support of the preservation of Alaska’s open primary and ranked-choice voting system as current law.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-27

TITLE: INCREASE NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION GRANT FUNDING

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) is a Federal law that provides a process for museums and Federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items- human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony – to lineal descendants, culturally affiliated Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and also provides for the disposition of Native American funerary objects and human remains removed from federal or tribal lands; and

WHEREAS: NAGPRA has played an essential role in empowering Native American communities to recover culturally important items from Federal agencies and museums and thus has helped to revitalize Native cultures that have been historically suppressed; right past wrongs; and has also fostered productive relationship between Native communities and Federal agencies and museums; and

WHEREAS: NAGPRA has led to many successes, but its continued beneficial impacts depend on increased support from Congress through appropriated funding; and

WHEREAS: The NAGPRA Grant Program is annually funded by Congress for only \$1.9 million to be awarded across all eligible tribes and museums, and the Repatriation Grants are limited to up to \$15,000 per tribe per year; and

WHEREAS: The NAGPRA Grant Program has no authorization for capital funding to allow tribes to build adequate facilities in order to receive, store, and protect repatriated sacred and cultural items and remains; and

WHEREAS: Small and inadequately funded tribes in Alaska have insufficient long-term funds available to construct facilities in their communities in order to adequately care for and protect sacred and cultural items and remains that are returned to these tribes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request Congress to create a new grant program within NAGPRA for the construction of tribal facilities for the appropriate protection and storage of sacred and cultural items and human remains and to further increase the funding for NAGPRA grants by \$20 million annually and to continue funding this grant program at that level of funding annually.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-28

- TITLE: OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED REVISIONS TO 25 C.F.R. CHAPTER II (INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS BOARD) UNDER THE INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS ACT OF 1990
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The Indian Arts and Crafts Act (IACA) of 1990 is a truth-in-advertising law that prohibits misrepresentation in the marketing of American Indian or Alaska Native arts and crafts products within the United States and authorizes the IACA board to promote Indian arts and crafts; and
- WHEREAS: The law was enacted by the US Government to help protect Indian artisans and craftspeople by making it illegal for non-Indians to claim, or in any way represent, that their artwork was created by an Indian; and
- WHEREAS: The Department of the Interior proposed draft revisions to 25 C.F.R. Chapter II (Indian Arts and Craft Board), including the expansion of the definition of *Indian Product*, allowing for non-Indian labor to work on *Indian Products* in certain situations, using a new certification trademark to certify that an item is an *Indian Product*; and asking the question should Native Hawaiian organization be included in the definition of “Indian Tribe” for purposes of regulations implementing IACA; and
- WHEREAS: The Department conducted one consultation session and five consultation-listening sessions hybrid meetings; and
- WHEREAS: The sale of Indian arts and crafts and its protections under IACA contributes substantially to the economic livelihood of Alaska Natives; and
- WHEREAS: The Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI), acting on behalf of Sealaska Corporation, the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), and other Indian organizations such as the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts and Indian artists testified during these consultation-listening sessions, serious concerns with the proposed revisions as outlined in the Consultation Draft 2023.04.03 that could undermine the proper functioning of IACA in the protection of genuine Native products; and

WHEREAS: The proposed changes could permit non-Native labor in a business that is at least 50 percent owned by an Indian to be used to produce art and craft products that could allow those products to receive a new certification trademark to certify that an item is an *Indian Product*; and

WHEREAS: The use of non-Native labor can lead to the mass production of “Indian” art and craft products made by non-Indians, and flood the marketplace, undermine the livelihood of Indian artists and craftspeople who make their own artwork; and

WHEREAS: The proposed certification provisions are very unclear in how the certification process functions, what the purpose of the certification is, why it exists; and

WHEREAS: While it is appropriate to consider the inclusion of Native Hawaiians and artisans under IACA, the proposed revision of the definition of “Indian tribe” needs to be clearly drafted and considerate of the fact that their inclusion in this definition should not be overly broad and unmanageable or adversely alter existing definitions of Indian tribes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives convey to the Department of the Interior and to Alaska’s Congressional Delegation that it supports efforts to improve and strengthen IACA and to promote enforcement and remedies for the proliferation of counterfeit Indian works of arts and craft; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recommend that the Alaska Congressional Delegation support the Department of the Interior in achieving the following:

- withdrawal and revision of the proposed regulations for adoption; and
- reconsideration of the overall structure of the regulations implementing IACA; and
- additional funding for the enforcement of IACA with dedicated IACA enforcement investigators; and
- implementation of a strong and effective certification trademark system as the core of IACB’s work and systems; and
- reconsideration of the definition of “Indian Products.”

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION; SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-29

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING ASSESSMENT AND ACTION TO ADDRESS LACK OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 160 federally recognized tribes, 145 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: The United States Postal Service was established under the United States Constitution; and
- WHEREAS: United States Postal Services in Alaska are essential to voting, participating in regulatory processes, healthcare, and social services; and
- WHEREAS: The 2019 Report of the Alaska Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights cited the critical role of the United States Postal Service in ensuring Alaska Native participation in voting, including the following challenges to meeting this role:
- a) “According to the U.S. Postal Service, when inclement weather impacts delivery to rural areas, passengers and luggage are the priority, not mail. This means that election-related mail is considered secondary in importance,”
 - b) “Because the U.S. Postal Service transfers mail from villages to the Anchorage central hub, where it is postmarked, rural residents who vote in a village may not have their ballots counted due to the possibility of late postmarking,” and
 - c) “Testimony indicated that U.S. Postal Service training on handling election-related material is inadequate due to the high number of U.S. Postal Service employees who need to be trained”; and
- WHEREAS: A December 7, 2022, Anchorage Daily News Article stated, “259 voters in St. George, Levelock, Ambler, Kiana, Kobuk and Noorvik had their ballots only partially counted” due to “six canvas bags” arriving after the “November 30th final deadline” for the general election; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native Corporations carry out essential corporate functions that require engagement with Alaska Native shareholders who live in rural communities who have limited or no internet access or may need language assistance to participate and these functions have been hampered by poor or lack of postal services in rural communities including conducting votes by shareholders for board member elections, achieving quorum by proxy for annual meetings, and voting on special initiatives impacting the future of Alaska Native Corporations; and

WHEREAS: Inconsistent mail service impacts rural resident's ability to receive check payments, access medical services and social services such as Medicare and Medicaid, and increases cost to accessing resources used for subsistence activities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2023 Alaska Federation of Natives Convention urge the AFN to secure resources to conduct a survey of the impacts of the lack of postal services on Alaska Native people, including the ability to participate in election processes, access to health and social services, participate in public process related to Federal or State public comment periods, and ability to access resources needed to participate in the subsistence way of life; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Federation of Natives work with the Alaska Congressional delegation to pursue a Government Accountability Office investigation on the status of Postal Services in rural Alaska, including the number of staff employed by the office, the amount of training staff receive, the causes to delays in delivery of mail, evaluation of employee compensation, employee turnover rates, and barriers to employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the findings of the survey and investigation are used to develop and advocate for solutions that can be addressed with the United States Postal Service and/or Congress and that the results of these efforts be reported out to the Alaska Federation of Natives member organizations.

SUBMITTED BY: NANA REGIONAL CORPORATION, KIKIKTAGRUK INUPIAT CORPORATION (KIC),
AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AFTER BEING COMBINED WITH A SIMILAR RESOLUTION

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS