



# NICOA

## National Indian Council On Aging

Advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders

### NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGING

#### Resolution # 2014-04

#### TITLE: NICOA Elders Call for a National American Indian/Alaska Native Hearing on Aging

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. (NICOA) of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the issues and needs of American Indian and Alaska Native Elders, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety, and welfare of our Elders, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, NICOA was established in 1976 by Tribal Leaders to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services, and economic wellbeing for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Elders. NICOA submits to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) this resolution passed by its members at their biennial meeting on September 5, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, AI/ANs are struggling with many issues that are unrecognized by policy makers as poverty increases, substandard housing deteriorates, health care dollars shrink, the cost of living increases, veterans suffer long waits and lack of care, federal funding decreases, Native Elders age in greater numbers and require home and community-based long term services and supports, raise grandchildren, live with Alzheimer's Disease, provide caregiving as they cope with their own aging challenges, work for acceptance of LGBT Elders; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress has stated that "older individuals who are Indians, older individuals who are Alaskan Natives, and older individuals who are Native Hawaiians are a vital resource entitled to all benefits and services available and that such services and benefits should be provided in a manner that preserves and restores their respective dignity, self-respect, and cultural identities" (42 U.S.C. 3057a); and

**WHEREAS**, in the 36 years since Title VI was added to the Older Americans Act, funding and services for Title VI have never been comparable to funding for Title III, leaving older American Indians and Alaska Natives without needed services to allow them to live vital, independent lives, as long as possible in their homes and communities. These many pressing concerns require a broader audience to create awareness and a sense of the urgent, imperative nature of the problem; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NICOA Elders request full Congressional Hearings on the Needs of American Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian Elders to enable tribal leadership to testify on the status and unmet needs of tribal Elders. These hearings should also be held throughout Indian Country to allow for our esteemed Elders attendance and participation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the congressional hearings be held prior to September 30, 2015 and be co-sponsored by the Senate Select Committee on Aging and the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs; and

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

#### CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the above resolution was passed before a duly called meeting of the National Indian Council on Aging membership on 5, September 2014, in Phoenix, AZ, at which a quorum was present.



Chairman