



# NICOA

## National Indian Council On Aging

Advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders

### NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGING

#### Resolution # 2014-11

#### **TITLE: NICOA Elders Support the Social Security Administration Accountability Act of 2014**

**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**, many AI/AN tribal Elders live in remote areas and prefer to receive Social Security information and guidance from a trained professional in-person at the local Social Security Administration (SSA) field offices instead of transactions using potentially confusing and intimidating online databases. Those serving AI/ANs can answer questions more readily and ensure that they understand the various benefits programs available to them from the Social Security Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, these important field offices provide valuable services to vulnerable Elders who may depend on their Social Security benefits as a sole source of income; and

**WHEREAS**, these Social Security Field Offices are facing closure and will therefore limit efficient, culturally sensitive customer service. These offices provide services that are critical to tribal Elders and reservation communities; and

**WHEREAS**, other provisions of the Social Security Accountability of 2014 call for submission of a budget estimate directly to Congress and the President, revises requirements that require inclusion of the number of cases pending at each hearing office and average processing time, requires the Commissioner to submit a detailed report outlining and justifying the process for selecting field offices to be closed, consolidated, or otherwise having limited access before the Commissioner can close any Social Security Administration (SSA) field office as well as requires the Commissioner to follow certain administrative procedures; and


**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NICOA recognizes and supports the Social Security Administration's commitment to support and provide customer service in rural areas benefiting tribal communities and Elders; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, NICOA Elders support the Social Security Administration Accountability Act of 2014 (H.R. 3997) and urges that SSA field offices remain open and continue to provide excellent customer service; 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