

2024 AFN RESOLUTIONS

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SUBSISTENCE

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-01

TITLE: A RESOLUTION TO REFORM EXISTING LAWS AND ESTABLISH A NATIVE-LED FRAMEWORK FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE ALASKA NATIVE SUBSISTENCE RIGHTS

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 traditional and customary use of natural resources (legally referred to as “subsistence”), including fish and wildlife, is the foundation of Alaska Native culture, economy, and well-being, providing food security, spiritual connection, and a way of life that has sustained Native communities across the state for millennia; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native peoples have stewarded the land, waters, and resources for millennia, through constant observation, adaptation, and sustainable practices that have ensured the long-term health of our ecosystems; this deep Indigenous knowledge and experience must be respected and fully integrated into decision-making processes for managing fish, wildlife, and other customary and traditional resources; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native aboriginal hunting and fishing rights were purportedly extinguished by Congress under Section 4(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), and during consideration of ANCSA, Congress expressed an expectation—a promise to Alaska Native peoples—that the State of Alaska and federal government would continue to protect Alaska Native traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering; and

WHEREAS: The Promise made to Alaska Native peoples has not been honored, and today Alaska Native subsistence rights are not protected under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), which provides for a “rural” subsistence preference but does not explicitly recognize Alaska Native-specific rights, resulting in the lack of acknowledgment of the unique cultural and

historical connection Alaska Natives have to subsistence, and which does not protect subsistence hunting on all Alaska lands or subsistence fishing in all Alaska waters; and

WHEREAS: In 1989, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled the "rural" priority for subsistence use unconstitutional under the State Constitution, and subsequent efforts by the State of Alaska to extend subsistence priority for rural residents, as provided in ANILCA, have failed; and

WHEREAS: The lack of state compliance with federal law has resulted in a dual management system, with the federal government managing subsistence on federal public lands (including portions of navigable waters) and prioritizing rural Alaska subsistence uses, while state regulations apply uniformly to all residents, with both systems failing to recognize and protect Alaska Native subsistence rights; and

WHEREAS: The failures of state and federal management to protect Alaska Natives' subsistence needs throughout Alaska, including in all navigable waters, have left Alaska Natives inequitably placed in the middle of two inconsistent and insufficiently protective systems, neither of which protects Alaska Native subsistence rights, our way of life, cultures, and traditions; and

WHEREAS: AFN has historically played a critical role in advocating for and defending Alaska Native subsistence rights; and

WHEREAS: The long-standing tradition of sustainable practices by Alaska Natives, despite facing systemic barriers imposed by external regulatory frameworks, demonstrates the need for a Native-centered system to manage the traditional and customary way of life; and

WHEREAS: The laws restricting Alaska Natives' subsistence rights can be redrafted to create an Alaska Native framework for subsistence management; and

WHEREAS: It is time to stop talking about the problems and shortcomings of federal and state laws and management and time to take action to strengthen and ensure the protection of the Alaska Native traditional way of life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for Alaska's congressional delegation and Alaska's Governor and Legislators to take action to establish an Alaska Native framework for subsistence management by pursuing the following goals:

- Recognize, uphold, and honor the government-to-government relationship between Alaska Native Tribes and the federal government as required under Executive Order 13175 and the United States Constitution.
- Recognize that the federal government has an obligation to consult with Alaska Native Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.
- Amend ANCSA to authorize Alaska Native management of fish and wildlife on all Native Corporation-owned lands in Alaska, as advocated for by Ahtna, Incorporated and other Native entities, which can be accomplished directly by the Alaska Native Corporation or through contracts with the appropriate Federally Recognized Tribal governments; and
- Repeal the extinguishment of Alaska Native aboriginal hunting and fishing rights in Section 4(b) of ANCSA, and recognize and affirm Alaska Native aboriginal hunting and fishing rights in and offshore from Alaska; and
- Advocate for recognition of an Alaska Native right to co-management of subsistence resources on public lands (including all navigable waters) in partnership with state and federal agencies through amendments to federal laws, including ANILCA, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and to require consultation with Alaska Native Tribes and organizations and establish standards for implementation of co-management, and to increase funding supporting all co-management efforts; and
- Take all actions to allow for Alaska Native year-round hunting of migratory birds across the State of Alaska and to allow for the use of non-edible migratory bird parts in the creation of Alaska Native handicrafts; and
- Amend the subsistence priority in ANILCA to provide for a subsistence priority for all Alaska Natives and rural residents; and
- Amend the different definitions of “Alaska Native” in ANCSA, ANILCA, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act to create one unified definition of “Alaska Native” which removes the federally defined one-fourth Native blood quantum eligibility and instead allows for self-determination by including citizens of Federally Recognized Tribes, and voting shareholders of Alaska Native Corporations; and
- Require the Federal and State fish and wildlife management agencies to collaborate with the federal and state Regional Advisory Councils and

Resource Advisory Committees and to adopt sound and responsible policies that will provide a greater abundance of fish and game; and

- Require the State of Alaska to make meaningful efforts to fully understand and address Alaska Native subsistence needs and ensure that any future Alaska constitutional amendments for subsistence fully incorporate and prioritize Alaska Native subsistence rights and uses, ensuring protections extend to all Alaska Natives, not just rural residents; and
- Enact legislation and provide necessary funding to ensure that agencies seek long-term restoration of depleted natural resource stocks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recognize that some of these goals are complex and require dialogue, consensus building, and a deliberative process to ensure the best legislative language and strategies are utilized to achieve the goals; therefore, the AFN Subsistence Committee will:

- Work collaboratively to solicit input and feedback from Alaska Native hunters, fishers and gatherers in all regions of Alaska, to ensure that their traditional and practical experience and Indigenous knowledge are incorporated into Alaska Native framework for subsistence management; and
- Work with diverse legal and policy experts, including experts working for Alaska Tribes and tribal organizations, to achieve the listed priorities through legislative drafting, legislative strategies, and public outreach strategies to maximize the likelihood of success in achieving the goals; and
- Work collaboratively with Alaska Tribes, tribal organizations and other Alaska Native organizations to form an effective alliance to achieve the goals of this Resolution; and
- Make any additional efforts necessary to achieve consensus and unity among the Alaska Native community in accomplishing these goals; and
- Report regularly to and seek guidance from the AFN Board of Directors; and
- Report to the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in 2025 and any necessary subsequent years to update the AFN Delegates on the progress made in achieving the goals of this resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT this resolution shall be the foundation for ongoing efforts to protect, defend, and enhance Alaska Native subsistence rights and practices for the benefit of future generations.

SUBMITTED BY: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-02

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND TRIBAL PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS RELATED TO SALMON
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 well-being and survival of Alaska Native people; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native Tribal communities have relied on fishing on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers to sustain our customary and traditional way of life for centuries, and fishing remains an essential subsistence practice to this day; and
- WHEREAS: The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta ecosystem—in which each part, including plants, birds, fish, and marine mammals, is connected to all other parts in an inter-dependent web of life; 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 the United States made to Alaska Native people when Congress enacted Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA); and
- WHEREAS: The salmon population in Western and Interior Alaska are in crisis and efforts by the United States, Canada, the State of Alaska to address this reality have been ineffective and are failing; and

WHEREAS: The population numbers for Chinook and chum salmon in Western Alaska have reached historic lows in the past three years and are 81% and 92% below the 30-year mean, respectively; and

WHEREAS: This crisis is particularly extreme in the Yukon River where a recent abrupt crash in chum and Chinook salmon populations caused the lowest salmon numbers on record and led to complete closures of salmon fisheries, including for all subsistence fishers, along the river for the first time in history; and

WHEREAS: The loss of both chum and Chinook salmon fisheries has created a multispecies food security and subsistence crisis along the Yukon River which has cascading effects on the whole ecosystem and all the communities within it; and

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

WHEREAS: There are many complex and interrelated factors contributing to the concerning decline in salmon populations, including but not limited to climate change, bycatch of salmon in Bering Sea trawl fisheries, disease, intercept fisheries, and more; and

WHEREAS: Poor management and insular management practices have exacerbated the salmon crisis. After the crashes in North Pacific salmon fisheries in the late 1970s and 1980s, the United States and Canada created and ratified the Pacific Salmon Treaty of 1985 which purported to address these problems, although it was not until 2002 that the Treaty officially included elements to address the crisis on the Yukon River; and

WHEREAS: The Yukon River Salmon Agreement between the United States and Canada sets out a management regime for Yukon River salmon and the Yukon River Salmon Act of 2000 provides specific mandates to the Yukon River Panel; and

WHEREAS: On April 01, 2024, the State of Alaska announced an agreement with Canada that implements a complete suspension of all Chinook salmon fisheries on the mainstem Yukon River and Canadian tributaries for one full cycle, from April 2024 through 2030 [hereinafter April 2024 Agreement]; and

WHEREAS: The April 2024 Agreement was a surprise to many affected Tribal governments, and it appears that Tribes were not included in negotiations or discussions between the State of Alaska and Canada; and

WHEREAS: There was likewise no formal or informal consultation process conducted by the State of Alaska with Tribal governments on the Yukon River; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities are wholeheartedly committed to finding solutions to the salmon crisis—the salmon crash has created a health and wellness emergency that threatens our ways of life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for clarity and transparency from the State of Alaska and strongly disapprove of actions like the April 2024 Agreement where negotiations took place behind closed doors and without any meaningful consultation or notice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon the State of Alaska to engage in meaningful consultation with Tribal governments along the Yukon River and to work with Tribes to develop a clear process whereby Tribes may request limited harvest for ceremonial use and the transmission of cultural knowledge in accordance with the Agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for the State of Alaska to work with Tribes and Tribal Organizations to produce a report detailing the impacts the 7-year moratorium will have on rural subsistence fishers, families, and communities, and how the State will address those impacts, and we demand consultation with Tribes and Villages before any future moratoriums; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon partners within the United States government to challenge the April 2024 Agreement under the federal trust obligation, and take action to ensure international agreements such as the April 2024 Agreement are made in accordance with federal law and comply with both the federal trust duty that is owed to all Tribes and the promises that Congress made in ANILCA.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

Health, Safety, and Welfare

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-03

TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE STATE OF ALASKA TO REFORM ITS CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 Natives and American Indians are disproportionately over-represented in the State of Alaska child welfare system; and

WHEREAS: AFN has facilitated more Tribal involvement in the child welfare system through support for the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact between Alaska Tribes and Tribal organizations and the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Despite this partnership, the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services (OCS) is underserving our children due to being under-resourced, understaffed, and unable to carry out the core duties and legal obligations to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our children, the most vulnerable residents in our State; and

WHEREAS: In many rural areas of our State, OCS offices are completely vacant or served only by itinerant staff that are plagued by constant turnover, and when OCS visits a rural Native village the agency occasionally does not provide the local Tribe and/or Tribal non-profit advance notice; and

WHEREAS: These persistent issues demonstrate insurmountable challenges to the State's responsibility to care for its most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS: Our children and families suffer permanent and foreseeable harms from the State's failure to satisfactorily fund and support child welfare.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon OCS to more adequately perform their duties in partnership with Tribes and regional Tribal non-profit organizations, particularly with respect to rural site visits; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon the legislature of the State of Alaska and the Governor to fully fund OCS; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if OCS remains unable to meet the needs of Alaska children and families, the State of Alaska must explore implementing another system, in partnership with Alaska Tribes and Tribal Organizations, that is better able to protect our children and preserve our families to the greatest extent feasible.

SUBMITTED BY: ARCTIC SLOPE NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: REFER TO BOARD

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-04

TITLE: A RESOLUTION SEEKING THE RETURN OF JURISDICTION WITHDRAWN BY PUBLIC LAW 280 TO TRIBES

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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, the Tribes of Alaska have had systems of justice that are unique to each group, and

WHEREAS: The United States had a policy of terminating Tribes and disregarding traditional practices; and

WHEREAS: Public Law 83-280, commonly known as P.L. 280, gave jurisdiction of criminal matters to the state of Alaska, circumventing long-standing traditional practices; and

WHEREAS: The United States did not confer with Tribes when P.L. 280 was being developed; and

WHEREAS: P.L. 280 has hindered Tribes in maintaining law and order in their respective villages; and

WHEREAS: Tribal sovereignty is damaged and untold thousands of lives interrupted by the lack of law enforcement in the mostly Tribal rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska maintains that they do not need P.L. 280 to function as it states that it has all the authority to conduct law enforcement.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby request that Alaska's Governor seek to retrocede some or all of the authority granted under Public Law 280 to Tribes

and that Alaska's Congressional Delegation work with the federal government to accept the retrocession; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby request the State of Alaska convene a P.L. 280 Taskforce composed of Tribal, Alaska Native Corporation, and state leaders.

SUBMITTED BY: SHAAN-SEET, INCORPORATED

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-05

- TITLE:** A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT SB 1723 & HB 7227 LEGISLATION PROPOSED TO CREATE THE TRUTH & HEALING COMMISSION ON FEDERAL INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL POLICIES ACT IN THE UNITED STATES
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The Indian Civilization Act Fund of March 1819, the Peace Policy of 1869, the United States government, in cooperation with and at the urging of many denominations of the Christian Churches adopted an Indian Boarding School Policy expressly intended to accomplish cultural genocide by destroying our connection to our ceremonies, spiritual practices, traditional foods, ways of practicing medicine, our families, our communities and languages through assimilationist practices and policies created and enforced by the United States government in close partnership with church officials; and
- WHEREAS:** Between 1819 and the 1960s hundreds of thousands of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children were removed from their homes and families and placed in Indian boarding schools operated by the federal government and churches; and
- WHEREAS:** Many of the children who were taken to Indian boarding schools and did not survive were interred in cemeteries and unmarked graves; and the children who perished in neighboring hospitals and other institutions were buried in on-campus and off-campus cemeteries and unmarked graves; and
- WHEREAS:** American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities continue to experience some of the highest statistics around suicide, overdose, sexual assault and sexual abuse as well as domestic violence, child maltreatment and generalized depression and anxiety than any other group of people in the world, this is fueled by intergenerational trauma, cultural and familial disruption from experiences rooted in Indian Boarding Schools practices and Policies, resulting in divided family structures, damaged cultures and individual identities, and inflicted chronic physical and psychological ramifications on American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children, families, and communities;

WHEREAS: The descendants of these children, spanning across multiple generations, continue to experience the same colonial violence their ancestors experienced directly while residing in boarding school institutions due to the insidious continuation of federal policy that established and perpetuated the initial violence, wherein the trauma they endured remains unacknowledged and unresolved to this day, from the Attorney General’s Advisory Committee on American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence: Ending Violence so Children Can Thrive: “American Indian and Alaskan Native children experience posttraumatic stress disorder at the same rate as veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and triple the rate of the general population.”; and

WHEREAS: The federal government has a responsibility to fully investigate its role in, and the lasting effects of, Indian Boarding School Policies; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives recognizes that prior to statehood, Alaska had 33 boarding schools in operation ranking third in the nation at the time for number of boarding school locations; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives supports the need for the development of the Commission as a starting point in truth, healing and reconciliation, and believe minor adjustments could be made in the language of the bill that would better support this foundational work, such as the following:

1. Definition of “Indian Boarding School Policies.” This definition should not be limited to an era starting in 1819 with the Indian Civilization Fund Act. Truth and reconciliation demand full transparency that is not limited to one legislative occurrence and must include the history leading up to it.
2. Collection of Testimony. There must be a clear statement that survivors can remain anonymous, that their personal information is protected, and that the commission will first learn, then honor cultural and spiritual protocols while collecting testimony. The Commission must make it a priority to protect the health and welfare of those survivors and descendants involved and use culturally appropriate collection practices. Elders, language speakers, traditional practitioners, and knowledge keepers should all be consulted and included to create safe and welcoming spaces for survivors, descendants, and their families, as well as consulted for aftercare and follow-up far beyond the initial date testimony is given.
3. Advisory Committee Membership. The development and work of the Commission should rely on all expertise that Indian Country has on this subject and should not exclude or limit Native organization participation in the Advisory Committee.
4. Support for Native allotments for former Native students as required by federal and state law.

WHEREAS: To support the establishment a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States, including other necessary advisory committees and subcommittees to:

- A full inquiry and investigation that acknowledges the genocide and assimilation policies through the use of boarding schools and education, including Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools in hub communities and villages;
- A full investigation that is not limited by the 1819 Civilization Act as a starting point; the U.S. inherited and has benefitted from these practices that began prior to 1819;
- Protection of survivors and descendants of survivors when collecting testimony that allows for anonymity or other solutions that will not cause further harm and trauma to survivors, their families and descendants;
- Provides strong provisions that allow for the Commission to subpoena and investigate private entity records;
- Development and dissemination of Commission findings and recommendations that is fully transparent;
- Recognition that this Act is only the beginning to correct the continuing harm of the boarding school legacy;
- Any repatriation solutions must apply to our children’s graves regardless of the status of land where they are located; and
- Broader inclusiveness of Native-led organizations with expertise in the issues at hand; and
- Address data ownership and management of sensitive data, ensuring that Native communities retain control over their information and the collection, storage, and use of such data.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives do hereby support the “Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding Schools Policies in the United States Act” (S.1723 and H.R. 7227) and urges the House and Senate to pass S. 1723 and H.R. 7227.

SUBMITTED BY: CURYUNG TRIBAL COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-06

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ALYCE SPOTTED BEAR AND WALTER SOBOLEFF COMMISSION ON NATIVE CHILDREN REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR NATIVE CHILDREN RELATED TO EDUCATION, PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, CHILD WELFARE, JUVENILE JUSTICE AND RELATED RESEARCH AND DATA PRIORITIES
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS: Congress established the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children with the charge to:
- Conduct a comprehensive study of the programs, grants, and supports available to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians from birth through age 24, and
 - Make recommendations about how this overall system could be strengthened, improved, and where needed, transformed to better help Native children and youth thrive.
- WHEREAS: The Commission is named in honor of two passionate advocates for Native children and youth: Ms. Spotted Bear was a chairwoman of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, a recognized leader in education, and a distinguished cultural historian. Mr. Soboleff was a religious leader for Alaska Native people, a noted Tlingit educator and the first Alaska Native Chairman of the Alaska State Board of Education; and
- WHEREAS: Throughout the last century, a succession of U.S. government reports has documented the challenging conditions and circumstances in which Native children and youth live, and the adverse outcomes that these conditions and circumstances can produce; and
- WHEREAS: Native communities have pushed back on that deficit focus, encouraging the Federal government, state governments, and other partners to look instead at the successes that Native children, youth, and families have realized—and to

invest in programs and policies proven to generate wellbeing, to develop sustainable systems that can deliver effective wraparound services to children, youth and their families and to amplify the unique factors offered by Native cultures that promote resilience among Native children and youth; and

WHEREAS: The Commission, after listening to hundreds of witnesses, visiting communities across the United States, Alaska and Hawaii, and considering available research and expertise determined that many successful models have generated from Native communities and that transformative change for Native children and youth is possible; and

WHEREAS: Each of the Commission's recommended investments and ideas for federal, state and Tribal policy makers and program managers is intended to bolster indigenous protective factors, build resilience, and reduce risk to Native children and youth so that policy and programmatic changes will allow Native children and youth to realize their potential; and

WHEREAS: In the report, the Commission identified concepts and concrete steps to take toward greater resilience and success for Native children and youth by describing successful, scalable solutions and lifting those to the attention of all stakeholders with the goal of providing a bright future for Native children and youth; and

WHEREAS: The Commission identified the following key themes that arose throughout the subject matter and geographical diversity of its work:

1. Cultural engagement and language learning are critical components of healing and resilience that promote positive identity and protective factors against risks;
2. Community control and community-level decision-making yield the best results, which affirms Tribal sovereignty and self-determination by putting Tribes and Tribal organizations in the driver's seat for financial control and program design; and
3. Flexible funding approaches support innovation and responsiveness, self-governance and self-determination, and allow Native communities to integrate complementary programs, respond more quickly to urgent or changing circumstances, create wraparound services, and provide more holistic responses to the needs of children and youth; and
4. Trauma is a root cause of many of the issues with which Native children, youth, and families wrestle today, with personal, intergenerational, and historical trauma giving rise to layered and cyclical effects in Native families; adverse childhood experiences are both a cause and an effect of such trauma. By contrast, benevolent childhood experiences are an important

counterbalance and healing force in the lives of Native children and youth throughout the life course; and

5. Native community leaders, service delivery practitioners, and other experts generally have a broad understanding of who qualifies as a “Native” child. Participants in Commission hearings and site visits emphasized diverse and inclusive criteria, suggesting that Native children and youth would be best served by the broadest definition possible concerning “who counts” to receive programs and services under Federal law; and

WHEREAS: The Commission received evidence about the importance of:

1. Resource equity with states, funding, and the importance of Federal measures to ensure state compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act.
2. Tribes’ and Tribal organizations’ freedom to flexibly implement their own juvenile justice systems and to track their children and youth who are in other justice systems. Testimony focused on the value in both settings of preventive measures and treatment as opposed to detention in addressing the behavior of Native children and youth.
3. Healthy lifestyles, nutrition, and behavioral health throughout life-course.
4. Tailored education for Native students from early childhood through higher education and about the critical role that Native cultures and languages can play in supporting Native student success.
5. Multidisciplinary flexibility in program and funding streams, of more highly qualified professional Native and non-Native staff across all sectors, of more consistent funding through set-asides and noncompetitive grant processes, and of incentivizing programs that deliver success.
6. Collaborative research in Native communities that accurately enumerates and addresses Native children and youth, recognizes issues of data sovereignty in Native communities, and is directly responsive to Native aspirations for their children and youth.

WHEREAS: The Commission issued 29 recommendations that incorporate that evidence, based on the federal trust responsibility and the affirmation that what is designed, implemented and controlled by Tribes and Tribal organizations works best to improve outcomes for Native children and youth; and

WHEREAS: It is incumbent upon the Alaska Federation of Natives and all Alaska Native people and entities to ensure that the Commission’s recommendations are executed at the Tribal, local, state and federal levels; and

WHEREAS: These recommendations include established solutions from decades of commissions, research and study that are long overdue.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives fully support the Commission on Native Children Report and Recommendations; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives will:

1. Utilize the recommendations in the various areas to promote systemic changes;
2. Urge the White House and Secretaries of Interior, Health and Human Services, Justice and Education to utilize their full authority to implement these recommendations; and
3. Utilize the recommendations to achieve change at the state legislative and administrative levels; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon Congress to take immediate action to implement the recommendations because our children and youth deserve no less.

SUBMITTED BY: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS AS A BOARD-SPONSORED RESOLUTION

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-07

TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE CREATION OF A NEW, CENTRALIZED FUND TO ADDRESS COASTAL COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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: Every ecosystem—in which each part, including the land, waters, plants, birds, fish, and marine mammals, is connected to all other parts—is an inter-dependent web of life; and

WHEREAS: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) defines Coastal resilience as building the ability of a community to "bounce back" after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts; 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 well-being and survival of Alaska Native people; and

WHEREAS: Coastal regions and numerous riverways are experiencing extreme change and communities in our region are dealing with overlapping and compounding crises; and

WHEREAS: Warming water in the north-central Pacific and western Bering Sea have contributed to large storms earlier in the fall before our coasts are protected by sea ice; and

- WHEREAS: In 2019, a Denali Commission Statewide Threat Assessment identified 95 communities facing a high to moderate risk for damage from erosion and 93 communities facing a high to moderate risk of damage from flooding; and
- WHEREAS: In 2022, flooding and storm surges from Typhoon Merbok affected more than 35 communities and 1,300 of coastline in Western Alaska—for many of our people, a year’s worth of food was lost, subsistence camps were destroyed, and critical infrastructure was lost or badly damaged; and
- WHEREAS: In 2023 severe ice-jam flooding impacted communities on the Yukon-Kuskokwim and Tanana Rivers; and
- WHEREAS: Extreme weather events like Typhoon Merbok are becoming more common and catastrophic for our communities as they occur during times of the year when rebuilding infrastructure is all but impossible due to limitations on travel and materials; and
- WHEREAS: Southeast Alaska has had hazardous events in the last three years including landslides and flooding; and
- WHEREAS: The loss of sea ice in the Bering Strait and Arctic regions has led to drastically increased vessel traffic which presents heightened risks to our communities and the marine resources we rely upon, such as noise pollution and the potential for large oil spills; and
- WHEREAS: The U.S. Arctic is of strategic importance to the Nation due to its location, longstanding Indigenous communities, abundant natural resources, and potential for commercial development; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities across the State and in regions are also experiencing an extended salmon crisis; the loss of both chum and Chinook salmon fisheries has created a multispecies food security and subsistence crisis along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers which has cascading effects on the whole ecosystem and all of the communities within it; and
- WHEREAS: There are complex and interrelated factors contributing to the salmon crash, including climate change and fisheries management; and
- WHEREAS: The State of Alaska has not conducted Risk Assessments and Engineering Analysis for all of the communities facing severe to moderate flooding and erosion risks, which would help the communities mitigate and recover from these risks; and

WHEREAS: Existing federal programs to address disaster response, oil spill response, and fisheries collapse are housed in different agencies. These federal programs initiate after a disaster has occurred or begun, agencies can be slow to respond, and each program has administrative requirements that can be tremendous burdens on small communities; and

WHEREAS: In the last three and a half years, the Biden-Harris Administration has released new guidance related to the Arctic, climate change, Tribal engagement, Traditional Knowledge, and environmental justice that acknowledge the federal government's trust responsibility to our people and make commitments to advancing environmental justice and equity, climate resilience, and ocean stewardship, as well as historic new funding opportunities for communities to expand climate solutions and readiness; and

WHEREAS: Despite these policy directives and new programs, the size and siloed structure of the federal government and the limited capacity of communities who are already under have prevented meaningful application of these new policies in Western Alaska; and

WHEREAS: The destruction caused by Typhoon Merbok and the ongoing salmon crisis have created health and public safety emergencies that threaten our ways of life and are a true test of federal policies and strategies, and federal responses have been inadequate; and

WHEREAS: Increased shipping in our waters has the potential to create another ecological disaster and is a test of the federal government's ability to learn from past disasters. At the same time, shipping is a vital resource that brings the materials needed to rebuild after disasters. Our communities are not prepared for additional stressors and creative cost-effective solutions that balance subsistence with community safety and sustainable economic development are needed; and

WHEREAS: These complex and interrelated weather, shipping, and ecosystem impacts affect communities throughout the coast of Alaska.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for the creation of a centralized federal superfund based off an adequate evaluation for a centralized fund specifically for Alaskan coastal and river communities to address the myriad crises affecting coastal and river communities, including funding for risk assessments and engineering studies, community preparedness and community and coastal resilience in the face of increasingly frequent and extreme weather events, increased shipping, and widespread ecosystem change and corresponding effects on subsistence foods, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call on Congress to allow Alaska Native Tribes and coastal communities to receive funding through the Coastal Zone Management Act.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-08

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PERMANENT FEDERAL FUNDING FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES BASED ON THE "NOT ONE MORE" NIAC REPORT
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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: There is a well-known crisis of high rates of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) and Human Trafficking (HT) incidents among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal Communities, with MMIP and HT incidents occurring at historically higher rates in the AI/AN populations across the United States, and especially in the State of Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: American Indian and Alaska Natives have a higher rate of victimization in MMIP occurrences and HT due to a lack of resources, a lack of prevention and planning, and minimal response; and
- WHEREAS: The Federal Government and its agencies have a trust responsibility to Tribal Nations to ensure adequate resources for the prevention of public health, public safety, and justice crises in Tribal Communities; and
- WHEREAS: The Not Invisible Act of 2019 was signed into law in October 2020. It established the Not Invisible Act Commission (NIAC), tasked with developing recommendations to address the public safety crisis of MMIP and HT; and
- WHEREAS: The NIAC provided a 7-chapter report with recommendations to DOJ, DOI, and Congress on November 1, 2023, after conducting several field hearings, and collecting testimonies from at least 260 witnesses, including survivors, family members, policy experts, service providers, and law enforcement from state, federal, and Tribal levels; and
- WHEREAS: In March of 2024, the DOJ and DOI issued a joint response to the Commission's Findings and recommendations, including acknowledging the increasingly high rates of MMIP incidents and HT among AI/AN people and outlining areas to address the recommendations from the NIAC. Some of their responses included

funding pathways that already exist and should be accessible to Tribal communities in their response to the MMIP and HT crisis; and

WHEREAS: In understanding and outlining the extraordinary challenges to the MMIP and HT issues in AI/AN Tribal Communities, more direct, recurring appropriations are needed with the least administrative burden to provide increased support to minimize the MMIP/HT crisis in Tribal Communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recommend that Congress, DOI, DOJ, and other Federal Agencies continue to examine the NIAC's recommendations to combat the MMIP/HT crisis in AI/AN communities and provide a follow-up with more direct and specific actions that will be taken in fiscal years 25 & 26 in appropriating unencumbered funds to support Tribal Communities as they strive to address the high rates of MMIP/HT incidence in our communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives recommend that DOI and DOJ continue to request additional appropriations each fiscal year moving forward to increase base funding to Tribes to provide support needed for care services to victims and survivors of the MMIP crises and to continue to contribute the space, platform, and voice in promoting the need for dedicated resources to the MMIP/HT crises in Tribal Communities.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-09

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE STATE AND FEDERAL DELEGATION TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION ON THE HEROIN, FENTANYL, AND METHAMPHETAMINE EPIDEMIC
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 is experiencing a historical crisis with the increase and severe impacts of the Opioid and Methamphetamine Epidemic on communities, families, and the youth, resulting in significant hardship and irreparable harm to families and the community; and
- WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities like Bethel, Alaska have been identified as high intensity drug trafficking cities by the Federal Government; and
- WHEREAS: Due to unfilled positions, the Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotic Team (WAANT) has not been active in some regions in Alaska facing an incredible increase in drug trafficking for the past three years; and
- WHEREAS: The transient nature of state troopers and city police serving a two-week temporary duty (TDY) in many Alaska Native communities cause limited public safety in these communities, resulting in inadequate responses and investigations for drugs and alcohol; and
- WHEREAS: AFN recognizes the responsibility of advocating for the protection of Alaska Native Tribal members and communities in intervention of illegal sales and transport of heroin and methamphetamine; and
- WHEREAS: There is a strong and imminent need to combat this epidemic in a constructive manner for the wellbeing of Alaska Native communities and people; and
- WHEREAS: There is urgency for the assistance and recognition of our Congressional Delegation and Alaska State Legislature in addressing these critical issues; and
- WHEREAS: Official action should be pursued to address and remedy the heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl epidemic and/or crisis, including but not limited

to, distribution of naloxone (NARCAN) kits and training for tribal communities on their use, providing education on the hazards of opioids and methamphetamine, setting up a state-level task force to study how drugs are entering rural communities, and having public hearings before the legislature on the drug problem in rural Alaska and how to protect Alaska Native communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for Federal and State officials to appropriate and fund the fight against this Epidemic and/or Crisis through Government-to-Government relationships with Alaska Native Tribes throughout the State of Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the foundation for ongoing efforts to protect, defend, and enhance Alaska Native communities against the current historic drug crisis being faced by Alaska Native Communities throughout the State of Alaska.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-10

- TITLE:** A RESOLUTION ADVOCATING FOR CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT OF BIA SPENDING REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE IN ALASKA NATIVE COMMUNITIES
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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:** There are 574 federally recognized Tribes in Indian Country across the United States with approximately 229 federally recognized Alaska Native Tribes; and
- WHEREAS:** Public Safety programs in Indian Country, including Alaska Native communities, have historically been underfunded, leading to significant gaps in services and protections; and
- WHEREAS:** One in three communities in Alaska, almost all being Alaska Native communities, are extremely underfunded for essential services, including no local law enforcement, no active trooper response, no village police or safety officer, no Tribal or community police, no formal search and rescue teams, no detention centers, etc.; and
- WHEREAS:** The public safety crisis in rural Alaska, or ‘extreme rural America,’ continues to be amongst the highest rates of violence, Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, lack of search and rescue infrastructure, and lack of public safety building infrastructure; all due to underfunding or lack of funding to support these essential services; and
- WHEREAS:** Continued underfunding exacerbates risks, leading to higher incidences of crimes and lower trust in the law enforcement and justice systems; and
- WHEREAS:** On March 4, 2024, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the United States Department of the Interior (DOI), and the Office of Justice Services (OJS) issued the “Report to Congress on Spending, Staffing, and Estimated Funding Costs for Public Safety and Justice Programs in Indian Country, 2021” (2021 Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) report); and
- WHEREAS:** The 2021 TLOA report highlighted federal spending data for law enforcement funding costs in Indian Country across the United States. The report estimates

the total cost of public safety programs is \$1.7 billion for law enforcement programs; and

WHEREAS: The 2021 TLOA report estimated that the total cost for public safety and justice programs is over 3.509 billion dollars, including estimates to cover gaps in law enforcement programs, detention centers, and Tribal courts; and

WHEREAS: Congress has an ethical and moral obligation to uphold its trust responsibilities as a fiduciary to Native American and Alaska Native communities across the United States by providing adequate funding for essential services; and

WHEREAS: The 2021 TLOA report and recommendations should be included as base funding per year to address the gaps in public safety in Indian country and amongst Native American and Alaska Native communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge Congress to incorporate the spending requests outlined in the 2021 TLOA Report by the Department of the Interior, with adjustments for inflation, to support public safety and justice programs in Native American and Alaska Native communities and to help ensure adequate public safety and justice resources for Rural Alaska Native Communities.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR
CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

EDUCATION

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-11

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PRIORITY FUNDING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION TO ENSURE TIMELY, RELIABLE, AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING FOR ALASKA SCHOOLS, EDUCATORS, AND STUDENTS
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 is constitutionally mandated to maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State; and
- WHEREAS: Early notification and predictable funding are essential for sound financial management, maintain a high educational standard, and recruiting and retaining highly skilled educators; and
- WHEREAS: In 2024, the Legislature prioritized education funding, but in the wake of the administration’s veto coupled with prolonged flat funding, rising inflation, and escalating costs in healthcare, transportation, operations, and maintenance, has eroded school district’s purchasing power, making it increasingly difficult to streamline high level student achievement; and
- WHEREAS: It is imperative that the State invest in education to reverse the ongoing out-migration and economic decline in the State of Alaska; and
- WHEREAS: Shifting state expenditure responsibilities onto local governments undermines municipalities’ ability to fund vital programs such as community services and transportation, which is vital to the well-being of students and families.
- NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the State of Alaska to raise the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$1,526 to account for inflation and to inflation proof the BSA annually, to restore the purchasing power schools have lost since FY17, ensuring all schools can meet the educational need of their students, and fully

fund public school breakfast and lunch programs.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA/SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS WITH INCLUSION OF CURRENT BSA AND INFLATION

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

LAND, ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-12

TITLE: ADVANCING ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY AND SECURITY IN RURAL ALASKA COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 Village of Aniak and the Akiak Native Community, two of the 229 federally recognized Tribes in Alaska, have recently endured severe energy crises, underscoring the broader and systemic energy challenges faced by rural Alaska communities; and

WHEREAS: Energy sovereignty is the cornerstone of Tribal self-determination, empowering Alaska Native communities to make decisions about their energy systems that align with their cultural values, economic needs, and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS: Energy security is fundamental to preserving cultural practices, maintaining local economies, and ensuring the well-being of residents in rural Alaska communities; and

WHEREAS: The ability to sustainably harvest, process, and store traditional foods is intrinsically linked to energy security, making reliable and affordable energy systems crucial for sustaining food sovereignty in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Rural Alaska communities face significant challenges related to the reliability, affordability, and sustainability of their energy systems, leading to severe impacts on residents' well-being, cultural practices, and economic stability; and

WHEREAS: These limitations hamper the efforts of regional and village Alaska Native Corporations to support the economic needs of their shareholders; and

WHEREAS: Recent events highlight the severity of these challenges:

1. In May 2023, the community of Aniak faced a severe energy crisis when power bills suddenly quadrupled, forcing families, businesses, and the local

school district into financial distress; and

2. Akiak endured a 52-day power outage due to generator failures, forcing residents to rely on personal generators at a cost of approximately \$100 per day to preserve subsistence foods; and

WHEREAS: The financial strain of these energy crises, even on households receiving Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) support, often exhausts available resources long before emergencies arise, signaling a need for increased LIHEAP funding to address unforeseen energy crises in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Climate change poses unprecedented challenges to rural Alaska's energy and food systems, necessitating innovative, locally driven solutions that respect traditional knowledge and sovereign Tribal rights; and

WHEREAS: The Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA), a Tribally Designated Housing Entity, administers federal HUD Office of Native Programs, Indian Housing Block Grant funds for 52 Tribes across 48 communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region, including Aniak and Akiak; and

WHEREAS: AVCP RHA reports that unsustainable increases in energy costs directly impact current and future housing projects, hindering their ability to provide affordable housing in areas already facing the nation's highest rates of overcrowding, limited economic opportunities, and exorbitant living expenses; and

WHEREAS: The pervasiveness of escalating energy costs across rural Alaska severely impacts the quality and affordability of education, threatening the ability of institutions like the Kuspuk School District to provide essential services, maintain facilities, and support programs vital for preserving cultural knowledge and preparing students for future opportunities; and

WHEREAS: Decision-making boards, commissions, and regulatory entities in Alaska often lack adequate representation from rural and Alaska Native communities, resulting in policies that fail to effectively address the unique challenges these communities face; and

WHEREAS: Effective policy solutions must be tailored to the unique logistical, cultural, and economic conditions in rural Alaska, which differ significantly from those in urban areas, and must be developed with meaningful input from Tribal leaders, affected rural residents, and affected regional and village Alaska Native Corporations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the

Alaska Federation of Natives call upon the State of Alaska and the federal government to recognize energy sovereignty as an inalienable right of Tribal nations, fundamental to self-determination, cultural preservation, and food security, and to work in true government-to-government partnership with Tribes to develop sustainable, culturally-rooted energy solutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the State of Alaska and Federal Government to immediately issue disaster declarations for energy crises affecting all Tribes in Alaska, ensuring timely and effective assistance that respects Tribal sovereignty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call on the State of Alaska and Federal Government to expedite and increase LIHEAP funding specifically designated for energy emergencies in rural Alaska, providing direct relief to households impacted by such crises and supporting food security efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives demand the State of Alaska and Federal Government prioritize the inclusion of Alaska Native and Tribal representatives on relevant boards and commissions to ensure that rural energy challenges and sovereignty concerns are adequately reflected in decision-making spaces; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives advocate for the development of a comprehensive, statewide rural energy strategy that addresses the unique needs of each region, promotes energy independence, and supports traditional subsistence practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call for increased investment in renewable energy systems and infrastructure upgrades that align with local cultural values and promote long-term sustainability in rural Alaska communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call on the State of Alaska and Federal Government to create a Rural Alaska Energy Sovereignty Task Force, comprised primarily of Tribal leaders and rural residents and affected regional and village Alaska Native Corporations, to develop a comprehensive strategy that integrates energy independence, food security, and climate resilience while upholding Tribal sovereignty and self-determination principles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives pass this resolution to garner broader support for these

critical issues affecting rural Alaska.

SUBMITTED BY: ANIAK TRADITIONAL COUNCIL AND THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL
PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-13

TITLE: A RESOLUTION ASKING THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA) TO DISBURSE FUNDS ALLOCATED TO TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS UNDER THE TRIBAL PRIORITY ALLOCATIONS THAT CONGRESS APPROPRIATED FOR TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND REAL ESTATE SERVICES PROGRAM

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Tribal Governments are dedicated to protecting, maintaining and preserving the land, ecosystems and natural resources for their members and future generations; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Tribal Governments empower Tribal members to enhance their subsistence, cultural and economic opportunities by participating in these activities; and

WHEREAS: The Department of the Interior maintains government-to-government relationships with Indian Tribes, and facilitates support for Tribal people and Tribal governments through the promotion of safe and quality living environments, strong communities, self-sufficient and individual rights, while enhancing protection of the lives, prosperity and wellbeing of American Indians and Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS: The Department of Interior through the budget process of the United States of America is appropriated funds from Congress to ensure that the Programs, Services, Functions, and Activities are carried out; and

WHEREAS: The Department of Interior, Office of Indian Affairs Central Office is slow to disburse funds appropriated by Congress.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the

Alaska Federation of Natives hereby request that BIA disburse funds under the Tribal Priority Allocation for the Natural Resources, Probate, and Real Estate Services Programs based on the 2025 Tribal Priority Allocation.

SUBMITTED BY: CURYUNG TRIBAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS
BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR
CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ANCSA/TRIBAL

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-14

- TITLE: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR UPDATES TO REPORTS ON THE STATUS OF ALASKA NATIVES, INCLUDING LAND, SUBSISTENCE, HEALTH, ECONOMY, AND SELF-DETERMINATION
- WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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/the Act) was passed by Congress in 1971 and was intended to resolve long-standing land claims for Alaska Natives by imposing structures to support development and improvement; and
- WHEREAS: After ANCSA’s passage, significant concerns arose as to the implications of the Act on native sovereignty and self-government for Native peoples living in the Arctic including Alaska Natives and Native peoples in the circumpolar community; and
- WHEREAS: In 1983, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Alaska commissioned Canadian Supreme Court Justice Thomas R. Berger to chair the Alaska Native Review Commission (ANRC) and to conduct a study of the impacts of ANCSA on AN; and
- WHEREAS: In 1984 and 1985, the ANRC conducted public hearings around Alaska gathering evidence from sixty-two (62) villages and towns reflecting the Tribal voice and the effects of ANCSA and whether ANCSA was effective or not; and
- WHEREAS: In 1985, the evidence and testimony gathered by the ANRC resulted in the final report, Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission (the report), which published recommendations in three primary areas: land, self-government, and “subsistence” and discussed changes in the law for Alaska Native Peoples to retain control over lands, hunting, and fishing rights; and
- WHEREAS: Because of the Village Journey, work has been done to define and assess the status of Alaska Native land, water, and subsistence rights, including hunting and

gather, fishing, food sovereignty and security, and its meanings and impact to Alaska Native people; and

WHEREAS: In 1989, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), published The AFN Report on the Status of Alaska Natives: A Call for Action. As a result of AFN's 1989 report and at the urging of Alaska Native Organizations, the Alaska Natives Commission was created by Congress in 1990 to review the status of the health, social, and economic data that describe the status of Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS: The Alaska Natives Commission conducted a comprehensive study of the social and economic status of Alaska Natives, evaluated the effectiveness of Federal and State policies and programs and their impacts on Alaska Natives, and directed public hearings and specific actions by Congress to ensure that Alaska Natives have life opportunities comparable to other Americans, while respecting their unique traditions, cultures, and special status as Alaska Natives, and addressing the needs of Alaska Natives for self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, improved levels of educational achievement, improved health status, and reduced incidence of social problems; and

WHEREAS: It has been nearly thirty-five (35) years since review commissions were established to review the status, rights, and protections of/for Alaska Natives, including the publication of reports such as the *Village Journey* and *AFN's: A Call for Action*; and

WHEREAS: Current events, rapid environmental changes, social, economic, and demographic changes, and other developments have continued to affect Alaska Native communities and families, and the rights that were created to protect our people. Impacts include the salmon crash and food insecurity, catastrophic environmental disasters, climate change and resilience issues, the public safety crisis, the drug and fentanyl epidemic, among other significant factors; and

WHEREAS: Other impediments highlighted in the *Village Journey* and *AFN's: A Call to Action* should be reviewed and updated to determine the status of Alaska Natives and to ensure progress towards full protection of rights and overall preservation, sovereignty, and security for Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS: The voice, vision, and aspirations captured in previous reports are still relevant today, and continue to call for a review and changes in the laws and policies that guide the self-determination of Alaska Natives and the ability to fully and freely exercise self-governance, and retention of control over lands, hunting, fishing, cultural identity, and our way of life; and

WHEREAS: It's time to update the final reports to reflect the current state of Alaska Natives, the environment we live in, and the rights and policies that contribute to our overall health and well-being.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon Congress to reaffirm its commitment to support the protection of Alaska Natives through the appropriation of funds, and the reconvening of an Alaska Natives Commission to investigate, review reports such as the *Village Journey* and *AFN's: A Call for Action*, and any other such reports that have been published review impacts of current laws and policies (including ANCSA) on Alaska Native communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon Congress to appropriate funds and direct investigations to review the currently existing disparities in the status of Alaska Natives comparable to other Americans to assess and address the current needs of Alaska Natives for self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, improved levels of educational achievement, improved health status, and reduced incidence of social concerns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives call upon the State of Alaska to direct the same: to appropriate funds and direct investigations to review the currently existing disparities in the status of Alaska Natives comparable to other Americans to assess and address current needs of Alaska Natives for self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, improved levels of educational achievement, improved health status, and reduced incidence of social concerns.

SUBMITTED BY: THE ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

OTHER

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-15

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 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 55 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: ALSC's advocates in twelve offices and medical-legal partnership sites embedded within Tribal healthcare facilities around the state serve a population of over 98,225 Alaskans living below 125% of the poverty threshold, including more than 27,091 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, Calista, Koniag, 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 40 years ago; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska did make an appropriation to ALSC for State fiscal year 2025, in the amount of \$696,500, 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 7,000 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 LET IT BE RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the Governor of Alaska to retain the appropriation for ALSC in their proposed State FY26 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 CORP

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-16

TITLE: RESTRICT THE IMPORTATION OF IMITATION NATIVE AMERICAN ART

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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: Many indigenous communities are divided by the Canadian border which makes regulations like these impact Alaska Native peoples and Canadian First Nations; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native and Canadian First Nations arts and cultural expressions reflect our ancient cultures and continues to contribute to the cultural survival of Alaska Native and Canadian First Nations societies and communities; and

WHEREAS: The sale of Native arts combined with the subsistence economy allow Alaska Natives to remain in rural communities where cash income opportunities are limited; and

WHEREAS: The production and sale of Native arts provides significant income to Alaska Native and Canadian First Nations artists across the region; and

WHEREAS: Congress has acted to protect Alaska Native arts, cultural expressions, and artisans and consumers against the sale of fake Native arts made by non-Natives through the Indian Arts and Craft Act of 1990; and

WHEREAS: The mass marketing of imported imitation Native art that resembles authentic Native art and cultural expressions by foreign companies has emerged and is widely advertised on social media; and

WHEREAS: The fake Native art and cultural expressions is further marketed as made by “Indigenous” artists of other nations and who are not Native American, Alaska Native, or Canadian First Nations; and

WHEREAS: Such imported imitation Native art, that is marketed as made by “Indigenous” artist, but who are not Alaska Native or Canadian First Nations, is offered at considerably reduced prices competes with the sale of authentic Native art and

cultural expressions has a real and deleterious effect on the ability of actual Native artists to market their products; and

WHEREAS: Imported imitation Native art has significant economic impacts on our Native communities and jeopardizes the future of Native American, Alaska Native, or Canadian First Nations Indigenous art and cultural expressions; and

WHEREAS: The sale of fake Native arts further defrauds consumers, who believe they are purchasing authentic Native art and cultural expressions; and

WHEREAS: Such imported imitation Native art and cultural expression is created without an understanding of the cultural significance and history of the images depicted; and

WHEREAS: Imported imitation Native art interferes with public perceptions of Native cultures and histories and supports the appropriation of art forms and cultural expressions from artists without permission or proper compensation; and

WHEREAS: The mass importation of imitation Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Canadian First Nations art has created a serious threat to Alaska Natives arts and cultural expressions; and

WHEREAS: An urgent need exists to protect and preserve Alaska Native and Canadian First Nations arts and cultural expressions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request Alaska’s congressional delegation to take all appropriate measure to protect and preserve Alaska Native and Canadian First Nations arts and cultural expressions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives further request Congress develop a legal framework to restrict or impede the importation of imitation Native art that is not made by Alaska Native or Canadian First Nations “Indigenous” artists and are not authentic Native art and cultural expressions, and create a Federal stamp to recognize authentic Native art.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives further request Congress develop an authentication process for online sales of authentic Native art.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION/SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED AS AMENDED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-17

TITLE: ENDORSING BALLOT MEASURE 1 IN THE 2024 ELECTION TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE, REQUIRE PAID SICK LEAVE, AND INCREASE WORKER FREEDOM

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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: According to analysis from the Economic Policy Institute, Alaska Native workers disproportionately earn less than \$15/hour; and

WHEREAS: Ballot Measure 1 would increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2027 and peg it to inflation going forward; and

WHEREAS: Ballot Measure 1's increase to the minimum wage would directly raise the wages and living standards of the households of over 23,000 Alaskan children; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Natives face worse health outcomes than Alaskans as a whole; and

WHEREAS: 1 in 4 Alaskan workers don't have a single paid sick day; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities have seen the devastating effects of communicable illnesses such as the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS: Ballot Measure 1 would allow Alaskan workers to earn paid sick days so workers would not have to make the choice between showing up sick to work and spreading their illness to customers or staying home and losing a day's pay; and

WHEREAS: Ballot Measure 1 would allow Alaskan workers to earn paid sick days that can also be used to care for sick family members or to pursue important services; and

WHEREAS: Working families drive our economy, and when they can afford to buy basics or get sick without fear of not being able to pay their bills, Alaska is stronger.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby express our support and endorsement of

Ballot Measure 1 on the November 2024 ballot to raise the minimum wage,
allow all workers to be able to earn paid sick leave, and increase worker freedom.

SUBMITTED BY: KNIK TRIBAL COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ACTION: REFER TO THE BOARD WITH THE REC. AS A DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: TABLED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-18

TITLE: VOTE NO ON BALLOT MEASURE 2 TO PROTECT 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 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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 AFN 2023 Convention unanimously adopted Resolution 23-26, entitled Endorsing Preservation of Alaska’s Open Primary and Ranked Choice Voting Election System; and

WHEREAS: One in five Alaskans is Alaska Native, and six in ten 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 create 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 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby express our support to urge Alaskans vote No on 2 to preserve Alaska's open primary and ranked choice voting system.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION

COMMITTEE ACTION: REFER TO BOARD, BUT FOR REVIEW AND WITH A DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 24-19

TITLE: ENDORSING CONGRESSWOMAN PELTOLA AS CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 174 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 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: Mary Peltola was sworn in to serve the remainder of Representative Don Young's term in the U.S. House of Representatives from Alaska's at-large congressional district on September 13, 2022; and

WHEREAS: U.S. Representative Peltola was elected to serve as Alaska's sole member of Congress in the 2022 general election; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola was raised in Western Alaska and has participated in the subsistence lifestyle since her early childhood; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola was elected to the State of Alaska House of Representatives representing the Bethel region and served from 1999 to 2009; and

WHEREAS: As a member of the Alaska State Legislature, Representative Peltola served as Chair of the Bush Caucus, a nonpartisan group of representatives and senators who represent rural and off-road communities in Alaska, and worked to increase funding for rural programs; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola has served her entire lifetime and professional career working for Alaska Natives serving as a judge on the Orutsararmiut Native Council's Tribal court; the Bethel City Council; and the executive director of the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission that advocated for the protection of salmon runs in Western Alaska; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola has introduced and advocated for a wide range of legislation that, among other things, protects our veterans, strengthens and

protects Alaska’s fisheries, addresses critical priorities of the Alaska Native community, and supports economic growth and protects workers; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola has been a strong advocate for Alaska’s fisheries and subsistence users by introducing and working with her colleagues, regardless of party affiliation, for legislation to strengthen US seafood competitiveness in international markets, taking actions to enhance research to improve federal programs that support domestic seafood production and working tirelessly to reduce bycatch and protect fisheries habitat; and

WHEREAS: Representative Peltola has worked on a broad spectrum of issues for the Alaska Native community, including introducing legislation to extend the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment program, working with Southeast communities to solve the inequitable treatment of the five “landless” Southeast Alaska Native communities that were left out of ANCSA, and continuing to push for legislation that will strengthen Tribal families, extend SNAP benefits and ensure the financial needs of our Alaska Native communities and Tribes are heard and respected; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby express our appreciation to U.S. Representative Mary Peltola for her decision to run in the 2024 general election for the United States House of Representatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates of the 2024 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives hereby endorse U.S. Representative Mary Peltola as a candidate for the United States House of Representatives.

SUBMITTED BY: SEALASKA CORPORATION
COMMITTEE ACTION: REFER TO BOARD
BOARD ACTION: PASSED TO THE FLOOR
CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED