



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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USET Resolution No. 2012:001

SUPPORT OF MEDIATION IN CAYUGA NATION LEADERSHIP DISPUTE AND REQUEST FOR NON-INTERFERENCE BY THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

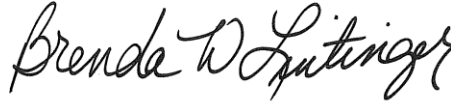
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes, Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** over the past decade, a small faction within the Cayuga Nation, funded by the neighboring Onondaga Nation, has challenged the composition of the Nation's governing council and the authority of the Nation's federal representative; and
- WHEREAS,** the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) when asked in 2005 and 2006 to resolve the Cayuga leadership issue, refused to decide disputed questions of Cayuga Nation law or impinge on the Nation's sovereignty by interfering in its internal affairs, indicating that such matters should be decided by the Nation and its members; and
- WHEREAS,** the BIA, on August 19, 2011, inexplicably and unexpectedly abandoned its long-standing policy of non-interference in internal matters of Tribal governance, and instead chose to unilaterally alter the make-up of the Cayuga Nation's leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** at the time of this unanticipated reversal of the BIA's longstanding policy of refusing to decide matters of Cayuga law, the parties were involved in federally supervised mediation for purposes of resolving their differences—a mediation process that was initially encouraged by the BIA but that now has been placed in serious jeopardy by the BIA's August 19, 2011 decision; and
- WHEREAS,** the BIA's decision to interfere in the internal affairs and leadership dispute of the Cayuga Nation establishes a dangerous precedent that could threaten the independence of those USET member Tribes that, like the Cayuga Nation, rely on an oral tradition instead of a written law to govern themselves; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors calls on the Bureau of Indian Affairs to: (i) respect the sovereignty and self-governance rights of the Cayuga Nation and all other Indian Tribes by not interfering in their internal political and governmental affairs, and (ii) support the efforts of the Cayuga Nation to resolve their differences, without federal interference; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors calls upon the Bureau of Indian Affairs to do everything in its power to support the efforts of the parties to the Cayuga Nation leadership dispute to resolve their differences through federally supervised mediation, and to refrain from taking any action that would undermine that process.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Choctaw, MS, on Thursday, November 10, 2011.



Brian Patterson, President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Brenda Lintinger, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

“Because there is strength in Unity”