



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.
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USET Resolution No. 2011:046

**SUPPORT OF NATIVE AMERICAN FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION 8(A)
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

- 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,** the United States Government has a unique legal and political relationship with American Indians/Alaska Natives, which is recognized in the U.S. Constitution, statutes, and Supreme Court decisions; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Congress has a legitimate interest in promoting the economic and political self-sufficiency of American Indian/Alaska Native as a way to fulfill the government's unique obligations towards American Indian/Alaska Native; and
- WHEREAS,** providing access to federal contracting opportunities to qualified Native enterprises provides critical incentives that stimulate economic growth in American Indian/Alaska Native communities, provides economic opportunities for American Indian/Alaska Native enterprises, supports social services programs, and encourages entrepreneurship; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Congress has held many hearings that seek to address and redress the overwhelming poverty and unemployment experienced by American Indian/Alaska Native both on and off the reservations that arises from their historical relationship with the U.S. Government; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native communities suffer from the worst poverty in this country, with unemployment levels up to 75% and, because of the lack of resources, there are few individual entrepreneurs in Native communities; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Government buys more than \$500 billion in goods and services annually, and has a statutory goal of awarding at least 23% of its purchases to small and disadvantaged businesses; and
- WHEREAS,** in hundreds of treaties with Indian Tribes across the country, and through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the U.S. Government committed to provide for the economic betterment of American Indian/Alaska Native, the majority of whom have been stripped of countless millions of acres of their ancestral lands; and
- WHEREAS,** one of the most successful federal initiatives has been to include American Indian/Alaska Native (including Alaska Native Corporations and Native Hawaiian Organizations) in the Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) Business Development Program; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native enterprises have struggled to break into the highly concentrated federal contracting marketplace, which is dominated by a handful of large companies, and only recently have some American Indian/Alaska Native enterprises become successful participants in the 8(a) program; and

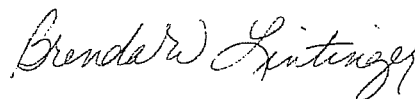
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native owned enterprises receive just over 1% of all federal contract awards compared to the five largest contractors who received 20% of all the contract dollars awarded in 2007; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native owned enterprises provide quality performance at cost efficient rates to federal customers, while they return significant benefits back to American Indian/Alaska Native communities, rendering the Native 8(a) program a rare example of a federal economic program that works; and
- WHEREAS,** there have been ongoing efforts by some members of Congress to repeal or significantly modify the Native 8(a) program based on biased information, and without consideration of the U.S. Government's unique obligations to American Indian/Alaska Native; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native have only recently become successful participants in the 8(a) program and Native communities are just beginning to experience the benefits of the program; and
- WHEREAS,** USET recognizes that participation of American Indian/Alaska Native in the SBA 8(a) program has been an important tool in building a strong Native economy and continues to provide substantial benefits to American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians; and
- WHEREAS,** USET recognizes past contributions of Congress and the Administration to work positively with American Indian/Alaska Native to improve the 8(a) program for all participants and protect the rights of American Indian/Alaska Native in the program; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors respectfully requests the continued support of the United States Congress to maintain American Indian/Alaska Native -owned enterprises in the 8(a) program for the benefit of all Native communities located in the United States; and, be it further
- RESOLVED,** the USET Board of Directors does hereby strongly encourage the Small Business Administration to seek ways to promote and expand participation in the 8(a) program for AI/AN owned enterprises; and, be it further
- RESOLVED,** the USET Board of Directors does hereby urge the Administration to continue to consult with American Indian/Alaska Native on any changes to the 8(a) program that may affect our businesses and communities pursuant to Executive Order 13175; and, be it further
- RESOLVED,** the USET Board of Directors strongly opposes any Congressional amendments, regulatory changes or other means to diminish, alter, denounce, or abolish the current provisions established in the federal procurement system allowing American Indian/Alaska Native to create economic development for the benefit of their respective Indian communities.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, on Thursday, February 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"