



## United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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**USET Resolution No. 2012:037****SUPPORT FOR TRIBAL AMENDMENTS IN THE  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT, SENATE BILL 1925**

- 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,** USET member Tribes are working for the best interest of their Tribal Governments, and their citizens, to protect, promote, and enhance opportunities for their people; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) women suffer from violent crime at a rate three-and-a-half times greater than the national average, and nearly 40 percent of all AI/AN women will experience domestic violence, one in three AI/AN women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, 17 percent of AI/AN women are stalked each year, twice that of other populations and the murder rate of AI/AN women is ten times the national average; and
- WHEREAS,** the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA), expired on September 30, 2011, and contains provisions that are critical to all AI/AN Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** these provisions provide critical resources and tools to Indian Tribes to respond to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking; and
- WHEREAS,** the United States Department of Justice released and strongly supports a comprehensive legislative proposal that seeks to address the epidemic of violence against AI/AN women by addressing the major gaps in the current system with solutions in the following three areas: Tribal criminal jurisdiction; Tribal civil jurisdiction; new Federal criminal laws; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) held a hearing, "Native Women: Protecting, Shielding, and Safeguarding Our Sisters, Mothers, and Daughters," on July 14, 2011, and from that hearing has emerged S.1763, the SAVE Native Women Act, a bill which contains VAWA amendments and other legislative proposals that will strengthen the ability of the Tribes and the U.S. to assist in reducing violent crime against AI/AN women; and
- WHEREAS,** the core provisions of S. 1763 are included in S.1925, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, including the following: recognition of concurrent Tribal misdemeanor criminal jurisdiction to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses, intimate partners, or dating partners, or who violate protection orders, in Indian Country; clarification of Tribal court authority to issue an order of protection over all persons, improvement to the ability of Tribes to respond to sex trafficking; and provisions to create stronger accountability, coordination and consultation with Federal agencies investigating and prosecuting violent crimes against women; and

- WHEREAS,** on April 26, 2012, the U.S. Senate voted and passed S.1925, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization of 2012, containing key Tribal jurisdictional provisions in a vote of 68 to 31; and
- WHEREAS,** on May 16, 2012, the U.S. House of Representatives voted and passed a version of the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization, HR 4970, without any of the key Tribal jurisdictional provisions intact; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** that USET hereby supports the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization amendments and legislative proposals designed to enhance Tribal sovereignty and services to increase the safety of American Indian/Alaska Native women that are contained within S.1925, a Bill to Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors hereby supports the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization amendments contained in S.1925 that will restore Tribal Government authority to investigate and prosecute all crimes of domestic and dating violence and violations of Tribal court protection orders, regardless of the offender’s status as a Tribal citizen, a Native American or non-Indian; and to clarify that Tribal Governments retain authority to issue orders of protection to all residents of Indian Country that seek protection from abuse; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors urges the United States Congress to include the bipartisan and constitutionally sound Tribal provisions contained in Title IX of S.1925, that create local solutions to the epidemic of domestic violence experienced by American Indian/Alaska Native women in the reauthorization bill sent to the President; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors urges the United States Congress to send to the President a strong bipartisan Violence Against Women Act reauthorization bill to increase the safety of American Indian/Alaska Native women and all vulnerable victims; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors urges its member Tribes to pass similar resolutions that support the Violence Against Women Act amendments and other legislative proposals contained in S.1925, the SAVE Native Women Act.

**CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Marksville, LA, on Thursday, May 24, 2012.



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



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

*“Because there is strength in Unity”*