



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

Nashville, TN Office:

711 Stewarts Ferry Pike, Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37214
Phone: (615) 872-7900
Fax: (615) 872-7417

Washington, DC Office:

400 North Capitol Street, Suite 585
Washington, D.C., 20001
Phone: (202) 624-3550
Fax: (202) 393-5218

USET Resolution No. 2014:052

SUPPORTING COMMENTS TO THE AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION STUDY GROUP

- 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 education of Indian children is of paramount importance to our Tribes, and our people; and
- WHEREAS,** our schools are a vital and direct link to our future, and represent a reservoir of strength that Tribes can call upon to develop our government, communities, and culture in years to come; and
- WHEREAS,** it is through education that we instill and exercise Tribal and cultural values, not least of which is Tribal self-determination; and
- WHEREAS,** the challenges facing Indian education are well-known, and it has been a decades-long struggle to improve Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) operated and Tribally operated schools so the achievement of our students can match that of their peers around the Nation; and
- WHEREAS,** the Departments of Interior and Education have convened a federal task force the "American Indian Education Study Group;" and
- WHEREAS,** the Study Group has recently released a report proposing to redesign the BIE, and to consolidate power and authority within the Department, rather than vest Tribes and Tribal schools with such responsibility; and
- WHEREAS,** we support the Study Group's ultimate goals for Indian education, and are appreciative of the work they have put into addressing a critical issue for our Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** we believe the Study Group's proposal can be strengthened by direct participation by Tribes and Tribal schools, and that the proposal does not adequately reflect the opinions and priorities of Tribes and Tribal schools; and
- WHEREAS,** the Study Group's proposal is not oriented towards an effort to provide Tribes and Tribal schools with the resources they require to improve educational outcomes, and that the proposal must be more closely aligned with the doctrine of Tribal self-determination; and
- WHEREAS,** the law firm of Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker has drafted comments based on feedback to the Study Group's proposal from Tribes and Tribal schools; and

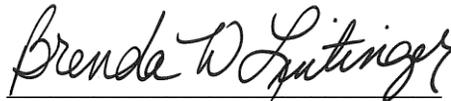
- WHEREAS,** in December 2010, the United States recognized the rights of its First Peoples through its support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), whose provisions and principles support and promote the purposes of this resolution; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors calls upon the Study Group and the Departments of Interior and Education to engage in another round of substantive consultation with Tribes and Tribal schools that addresses the concerns raised since the Study Group’s report was released, delaying any final report until meaningful consultation has occurred; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors supports redrafting of the Study Group’s proposal to align it with the purpose and intent of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act and the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act; and, be it finally
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors associates itself with the attached comments and asks that the Bureau of Indian Education considers those comments to be submitted on our behalf.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Bar Harbor, ME, June 4, 2014.



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



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

“Because there is strength in Unity”