



## UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

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Resolution No. USET 98:16

### WAMPANOAG SELF-SUFFICIENCY

- WHEREAS,** the United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprising twenty-three (23) 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 tribe's leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET Board of Directors is dedicated and committed to the needs of its tribes and members and to the goals of preserving sovereignty and inherent tribal rights; and
- WHEREAS,** one of those sovereign rights is the right of a federally recognized tribe to conduct gaming on its Indian lands, provided said gaming is conducted in conformity with applicable tribal and federal law, including the provisions of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act; and
- WHEREAS,** the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah is attempting to exercise its sovereign right to conduct Class II gaming within their aboriginal territory in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by seeking to have some 35 acres of land located in, and currently owned by, the City of Fall River, Massachusetts placed into trust for gaming purposes; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Fall River is supportive of the Wampanoag's gaming efforts and is prepared to sell this land to the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah for this purpose if certain legal issues can be resolved; and
- WHEREAS,** there is good reason to believe that the Governor of Massachusetts will concur with a proposal to take its property into trust for gaming purposes so long as the city of Fall River and the Tribe reach a mutually acceptable agreement and the Secretary of the Interior finds that this trust acquisition is in the best interest of the Wampanoag Tribe and not detrimental to the surrounding community; and
- WHEREAS,** this Wampanoag gaming project meets all of the requirements of and the Congressional intent behind Section 20 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act; and
- WHEREAS,** the land at issue is located some 20 plus miles from the Wampanoag Tribe's reservation in is an industrial area owned by the City of Fall River and comprises a large percentage of the City's land holdings which are available for economic development; and
- WHEREAS,** for this reason, the City of Fall River is concerned that this land is not left vacant in the event the Wampanoag Tribe does not use it for gaming purposes; and
- WHEREAS,** the Wampanoag Tribe does not wish to maintain ownership of this land unless it is used for Wampanoag Tribal gaming; and
- WHEREAS,** the Wampanoag Tribe and the City of Fall River have negotiated a purchase and sale contract which provides that if the land is taken into trust for gaming purposes and is subsequently not used for Wampanoag Tribal gaming, title to the land will return to the City of Fall River, Massachusetts; and

*“Because there is strength in Unity”*

**WHEREAS,** this contractual agreement meets the needs of both the City and the Tribe and is supported by the Wampanoag Tribal Council; and

**WHEREAS,** the Wampanoag Tribe has the inherent sovereign right to negotiate this type of business arrangement and has done so only after giving this matter full consideration and consulting with its attorneys; and

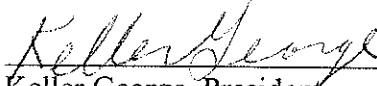
**WHEREAS,** the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah has strong economic need for the establishment of this proposed tribal gaming enterprise and needs to have this land taken into trust in order for that business venture to move forward; therefore, be it

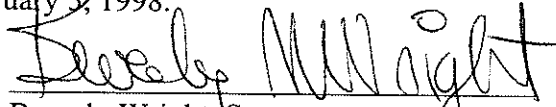
**RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors asks the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to: (1) recognize the inherent sovereign right of the Wampanoag and other Tribes to make their own business decisions on matters of this nature and, (2) accept this land into trust for Wampanoag gaming purposes under the terms and conditions proposed by the Wampanoag Tribe and the City of Fall River including, if necessary, the provision calling for the land to revert to City ownership in the event that the Tribe fails to use it for gaming purposes; be it further

**RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors also supports the passage of an Act of the United States Congress which accomplishes these same two goals and USET asks the Members and staff of the House Natural Resources committee and the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to take the steps necessary to insure the passage of this type of legislation at the earliest possible date.

#### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the annual USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, February 5, 1998.

  
Keller George, President  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

  
Beverly Wright, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.