



UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

USET Resolution 2001:047

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDING THE GEORGE W. BUSH
ADMINISTRATION'S CHILD WELFARE POSITION**

WHEREAS, United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) is an intertribal organization of twenty-four (24) federally recognized tribes; and

WHEREAS, the actions taken by the Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member tribe, since the Board of Directors is comprised of delegates for the member tribes' leadership; and

WHEREAS, there is a unique government-to-government relationship between the federal government and federally recognized tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, Congress, through statutes, treaties, and the general course of dealing with tribes, are charged with the responsibility for the protection and preservation of Indian tribes and their resources; and

WHEREAS, there is no resource more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children; and

WHEREAS, as trustee, the United States Government has a direct responsibility to protect Indian children; and

WHEREAS, a proposed initiative of the Bush Administration entitled "Strong Families, Safe Children" (attached) fails to address the unique needs of Indian families, children and tribal governments in the following ways: 1) It proposes additional funding of \$1 billion to States over a five-year period for preventive services, and does not consider funding to Tribes for similar services; 2) It narrowly defines "permanence" as either returning a child to a safe and stable biological or adoptive family, and ignores more culturally appropriate definitions of both permanence and family; 3) By omission, it fails to support the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act which covers procedures for working with Indian children in State custody who are in out-of-home placements; therefore be it

RESOLVED the USET Board of Directors recommends that the child welfare position of the current administration be amended; to include:

- 1) that provisions for need-based direct and flexible funding to tribes for prevention and intervention services for Indian families and children in adequate amounts with equitable distribution to all tribes;

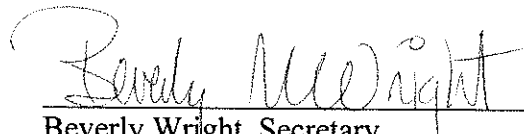
- 2) provisions for tribally defined strategies for "permanence" that include culturally appropriate options such as kinship care, guardianship arrangements, and other tribally approved living arrangements that lead to positive outcomes for Indian children;
- 3) that provisions mandate severe penalties for states which fail to comply with the Indian Child Welfare Act.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week meeting at which a quorum was present in Arlington, VA on Thursday, February 1, 2001.



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



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