



UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

USET Resolution No. 2002:065

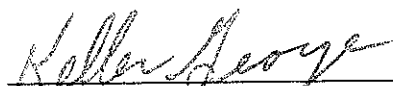
SUPPORT OF H.R. 1662 REAUTHORIZATION OF THE INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

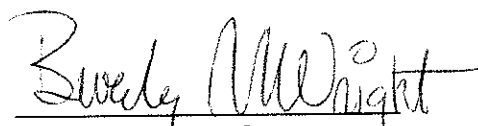
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-four (24) federally recognized tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the Indian Health Care Improvement Act has since 1976 provided a detailed structure for addressing the health care needs of American Indian/Alaska Native people in a manner consistent with the federal responsibility and authorization for appropriations in the Act expired in September 30, 2000; and
- WHEREAS,** H.R. 1662 and S. 212 has been introduced in the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively, but no action has been taken; and
- WHEREAS,** former Chief Joyce Dugan, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Chairman Eddie Tullis, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and Vice-Chairman Buford Rolin, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, were directly involved in the development of the bill currently before Congress through participation on the National Tribal Steering Committee on behalf of the USET member tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET Board of Directors endorses the enactment of the tribally developed bill which is intended to (1) increase the number of Indian health professionals; (2) improve the delivery of health services and increase the tribal consultation requirements relevant to health service delivery; (3) identify the total health facility deficiency in Indian country and authorize innovative approaches to health facility construction financing without waiving the federal responsibility to provide health services under existing federal law; (4) increase access to Medicare, Medicaid and other third party reimbursements for health services provided to AI/AN people; (5) increase access to health services for urban AI/AN people without reducing federal support for health care to tribal AI/AN people; (6) establish the Indian Health Service (IHS) as an agency of the Public Health Service; (7) provide authorization for a comprehensive behavioral health program; and (8) establish a commission to study the issue of how the federal government's obligation to provide health care to AI/AN people should be maintained as an entitlement and to provide for negotiated rulemaking regarding critical health care issues; and
- WHEREAS,** reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act is essential to maintain the federal policy of raising the health status of AI/AN people to the highest possible level and H.R. 1662 which is currently being considered removes barriers to improvements and most closely resembles the tribally developed bill; and
- WHEREAS,** H.R. 1662 takes account of the establishment of the federal policy regarding tribal self-determination and self-governance, which has developed since the original Indian Health Care Improvement Act was enacted and seeks to assure that health programs reflect tribal and urban decision-making to the maximum feasible extent; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors supports the enactment of H.R. 1662 Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and urges the Congress to approve the bill, as introduced.

“Because there is strength in Unity”

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present in Washington, D.C., Thursday, January 31, 2002.


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


Beverly M. Wight, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.