



UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

USET Resolution No. 2005:035

SUPPORT OF TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES FOR INCLUSION IN THE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT

- WHEREAS,** United Southern 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,** Indian Reservation Roads make up nearly 3% of the nation's highways, but receive less than 1% of national highway funds; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress has recognized that Indian Tribes, like other predominantly rural communities, must first have adequate infrastructure, including safe roads, if they are to be in the best position to implement economic development plans; and
- WHEREAS,** more than two-thirds of Indian Reservation Roads are unimproved, earth or gravel roads; and
- WHEREAS,** a quarter of the bridges in Indian Country are rated as structurally deficient; and
- WHEREAS,** 72% of all roads, and 39% of the paved roads in Indian Country are rated poor; and
- WHEREAS,** the number of fatal motor vehicle crashes on Indian reservations have increased by 52% over the past 25 years, compared to a national decrease of 2.2%; and
- WHEREAS,** vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for Native youth; and
- WHEREAS,** the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) was scheduled to expire on September 30, 2003, but has been extended by Congress through a series of Continuing Resolutions since that time; and
- WHEREAS,** USET Resolution No. 2003:038 and USET Resolution No. 2003:108 endorsed the tribal transportation priorities facilitated by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) TEA-21 Reauthorization Task Force and concluded that the legislative proposal prepared by the NCAI TEA-21 Task Force addressed the transportation needs of USET member Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2004, both the House and Senate approved bills in the 108th Congress that included many of the recommendations the NCAI TEA-21 Task Force, but could not reconcile differences in their bills in order to reauthorize TEA-21; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2004 and 2005, the members of the NCAI TEA-21 task force and the Inter-Tribal Transportation Association (ITA) have worked jointly to develop a set of tribal transportation priorities for inclusion in the Transportation reauthorization bill to be introduced in the 109th Congress; and

“Because there is strength in Unity”

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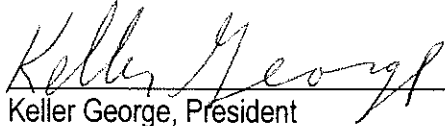
WHEREAS, the tribal transportation priorities are based upon the provisions incorporated into the reauthorization bills approved by the House and/or Senate in 2004, and further incorporate technical and "no-cost" modifications to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of tribal transportation activities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the USET Board of Directors hereby endorses the tribal transportation priorities proposed by the NCAI TEA-21 Task Force members and ITA for inclusion in the Transportation reauthorization bill to be introduced in the 109th Congress; and, be it further

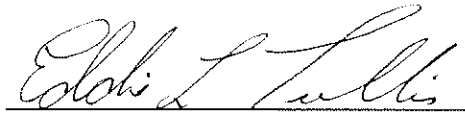
RESOLVED, that the USET Board of Directors respectfully urges Congress to introduce these priorities as part of the TEA-21 Reauthorization and respectfully calls upon the Administration to fully support these priorities and their prompt implementation upon legislation;

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present in Arlington, VA, Thursday, February 10, 2005.


Keller George, President

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.


Eddie L. Tullis, Secretary

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