



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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USET SPF Resolution No. 2019 SPF:006


CALLING FOR TRANSPARENCY IN OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET CROSSCUT OF FEDERAL INDIAN FUNDING


- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-seven (27) federally recognized Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET SPF Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribal Nation, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribal Nations' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribal Nations have a unique relationship with the United States that has its underpinnings in the U.S. Constitution, specifically, the Indian Commerce Clause, the Treaty Clause and the Supremacy Clause, in numerous treaties, and through the cession of vast tracts of Tribal lands and resources; and
- WHEREAS,** these resources are the very foundation of this nation, and have allowed the United States to become the wealthiest and strongest world power; and
- WHEREAS,** the federal fiduciary obligation to Tribal Nations, including through the federal appropriations process, is simply a repayment on this debt and the many promises made by the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** despite this abiding obligation, federal Indian programs and agencies are consistently and chronically underfunded, which continues to have disastrous impacts upon Tribal Nation governments and Native peoples; and
- WHEREAS,** a primary reason for this underfunding is inadequate requests made by the Administration to Congress through the annual budget process, failing to reflect a prioritization of trust obligations and the related promises that are at the core of the special and unique relationship with Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is responsible for preparation of the President's Budget Request each year, which includes determining requests for federal Indian programs and agencies, and setting funding priorities; and
- WHEREAS,** OMB asserts that Indian Country is funded at over \$21 billion in federal dollars annually, providing a crosscut reflecting this number, but without critical details; and
- WHEREAS,** from the perspective of Tribal advocates, including those who serve on budget formulation committees for federal agencies, \$21 billion is a dramatic over-estimate, with far less funding actually reaching Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens; and

- WHEREAS,** USET SPF suspects that OMB determines this figure by tallying the amount for which Tribal Nations and entities are eligible, regardless of whether these dollars actually reach Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** in the absence of greater detail, neither the Executive nor the Legislative branches can determine how well fiduciary trust obligations are being met by the federal government; and
- WHEREAS,** the Tribal Interior Budget Council has asked OMB for a full accounting of federal funding distributed to Indian Country, and to date, OMB has not responded to this request, continuing to take the position that as an extension of the Executive Branch, it does not have the same consultative responsibilities as other federal agencies; 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** USET SPF calls upon the Office of Management and Budget to immediately issue a full and transparent accounting of federal funding distributed to Indian Country; and be it further
- RESOLVED** USET SPF urges Congress to direct the Office of Management and Budget to provide a full and transparent accounting of federal funding distributed to Indian Country in upcoming appropriations legislation.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Annual Meeting held on the Sovereign Territory of the Seneca Nation of Indians, at which a quorum was present on October 11, 2018.


Chief Kirk E. Francis, Sr., President
United South and Eastern Tribes
Sovereignty Protection Fund


Chief Lynn Malerba, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes
Sovereignty Protection Fund

Because there is Strength in Unity