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, all branches of the federal government, including all departments, bureaus, and agencies of the Executive Branch, hold a sacred trust responsibility and obligation to Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, federal officials make daily decisions impacting Tribal Nation governments, but most American citizens have never received an early education, advanced education or work-related training about American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations, Tribal governments or Tribal communities; and

WHEREAS, federal policies can go awry because of a basic lack of knowledge and understanding of the unique federal relationship between the United States Government and Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, federal officials are expected to coordinate and consult with Tribal Nation governments, but absent the essential awareness of the fundamental principles that underlie these responsibilities, they do not have the tools necessary to implement these requirements; and

WHEREAS, federal employees working with Tribal Nations must know the key concepts, concerns, historical background, and the legal and cultural frameworks that shape the unique relationship the federal government has with Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, in January 2008, the federal government released, "Working Effectively with Tribal Governments," an on-line training course for the head of each executive department and those federal agency employees who work directly with Tribal Nations or on Tribal issues, including federal grant recipients and contractors; and

WHEREAS, the course was evaluated by Tribal, state and local government officials, tested at national Tribal organization meetings, and endorsed by federal agency Tribal advisory groups receiving positive feedback and recommendations for the final design and modifications; and
WHEREAS, this training ensures that all federal officials and employees who interact with Tribal Nations have quick basic training to become familiar with the fundamental principles and laws relevant to working with Tribal Nations on a government-to-government basis; and

WHEREAS, since 2008, on-going access to the training course has been provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM); and

WHEREAS, it has recently come to the attention of USET SPF that OPM is no longer hosting, “Working Effectively with Tribal Governments,” on its website; and

WHEREAS, USET SPF has consistently supported the training module and has advocated for it to be mandatory for all federal employees; and

WHEREAS, it would be a critical mistake to eliminate this training for federal employees and USET SPF is deeply concerned by this development, as this is likely to result in a diminished execution of the federal trust responsibility and obligations, and disagreements between Tribal Nations and the federal government; 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 Personnel Management to immediately reinstate the on-line training module, entitled, “Working Effectively with Tribal Governments.”

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