



# United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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### USET SPF Resolution No. 2016:031

#### **USET PRIORITIES FOR UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS UPDATE TO QUIET CRISIS REPORT**

- WHEREAS,** USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) 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 Nation's leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2003, the United States (U.S.) Commission on Civil Rights issued a report entitled, "A Quiet Crisis: Federal Funding & Unmet Need in Indian Country;" and
- WHEREAS,** the 2003 report revealed that federal funding directed to Tribal citizens through programs at these agencies has not been sufficient to address the basic and very urgent needs of indigenous peoples, in spite of a legal trust obligation that includes a fiduciary responsibility; and
- WHEREAS,** among the myriad unfulfilled obligations were: health care, education, public safety, housing, and rural development, with the Commission finding that significant disparities in federal funding exist between Native Americans and other groups in our nation, as well as the U.S. general population; and
- WHEREAS,** although the 2003 report revealed major failures in federal spending, many federal Indian programs remain severely underfunded, including the Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is working to update the "Quiet Crisis" report, which will provide vital information and statistics on the continued underfunding of federal Indian programs; and
- WHEREAS,** USET SPF has, through member Tribal Nation interaction, research, and advocacy, identified a number of areas that warrant further investigation via the updated "Quiet Crisis" report; and
- WHEREAS,** these priority areas are as follows:
1. The need to fully fund the Trust obligation, regardless of whether a Tribal Nation chooses Direct Service, or Indian Self Determination Education and Assistance Act (ISDEAA) contracting, or compacting as its funding delivery mechanism;
  2. Examination of a discrepancy between the amount of federal funding that Tribal advocates believe is received by Tribal Nations and the amount the Office of Management and Budget claims is distributed within Indian Country;

3. The expansion of contracting and compacting under the ISDEAA as fulfillment of trust obligations and a recognition of Tribal Nation sovereignty over the competitive grant process;
4. Fulfillment of the trust obligation via mandatory federal spending;
5. A reduction in reporting requirements associated with federal funding to Tribal Nations and ensuring that any necessary reporting requirements are measuring Nation rebuilding as opposed to other metrics;
6. Evaluation of the enormous potential benefits of establishing a legal framework that incentivizes dollars generated within Indian Country to remain in Indian Country;
7. The need for the U.S. to adhere to the principles of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples;

**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** the USET SPF Board of Directors supports the United States Commission on Civil Rights' efforts to update the "Quiet Crisis Report"; and, be it further

**RESOLVED** the USET SPF Board of Directors respectfully requests the United States Commission on Civil Rights include the examination of its priority issues in its update to the "Quiet Crisis" report.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, February 11, 2016.



Brian Patterson, President  
USET Sovereignty Protection Fund



Chief Lynn Mallerba, Secretary  
USET Sovereignty Protection Fund

*"Because there is strength in Unity"*