



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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USET SPF Resolution No. 2020 SPF:010

SUPPORT FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR ALL FEDERAL INDIAN FUNDING

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of thirty (30) 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,** the federal government's trust obligations are the result of the millions of acres of land and extensive resources ceded to the United States, oftentimes by force, in exchange for which it is legally and morally obligated to provide benefits and services in perpetuity; and
- WHEREAS,** the chronic underfunding of federal Indian programs continues to have disastrous impacts upon Tribal governments and Native peoples, who experience some of the greatest disparities among all populations in this country—including those in health, economic status, education, and housing; and
- WHEREAS,** on top of chronic underfunding and its accordant challenges, Tribal Nations face the problem of discretionary funding that is almost always delayed due to political discord or inaction unrelated to federal Indian funding; and
- WHEREAS,** since Fiscal Year (FY) 1998, there has only been one year (FY 2006) in which appropriated funds for the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) were released prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year; and
- WHEREAS,** delays in federal funding hinder the federal government's execution of its trust obligations to Tribal Nations, and have a destabilizing and disruptive effect on the provision of basic government services within Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** the most recent shutdown lasted thirty-five days and as a result, more than 50% of BIA workers were furloughed, while nearly 60% of IHS employees were forced to continue working without pay; and
- WHEREAS,** it is time for Congress to recognize its responsibility and obligation in ensuring that funding for federal Indian programs and services reaches Indian Country in a timely manner, regardless of its failure to enact appropriations legislation on time; and
- WHEREAS,** while USET SPF ultimately seeks a comprehensive overhaul of federal funding delivered to Indian Country across the federal government, including making this funding mandatory, advance appropriations is a near-term budgetary solution that would protect trust and treaty obligations from future inaction; and

WHEREAS, authorizing advance appropriations for Indian Country would bring funding for those agencies and programs into parity with other discretionary programs that the federal government deems critical and federal Indian funding should be afforded the same budgetary certainty and protections; 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

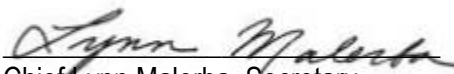
RESOLVED the USET SPF Board of Directors calls upon the Administration and Congress to work together to ensure all funding for Indian Country is provided through advance appropriations; and be it further

RESOLVED this resolution shall be the policy of USET SPF until it is withdrawn or modified by a subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Annual Meeting held on the Sovereign Territory of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians at which a quorum was present on November 7, 2019.


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