



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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## USET SPF Resolution No. 2023 SPF:011

### **SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRIBAL RESILIENCY PROGRAM AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of thirty-three (33) federally recognized Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET 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 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the agency responsible for all grant funding appropriated by Congress to support the National Preparedness Goal for all communities to be prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies to create a secure and resilient nation; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress has provided consistent funding to state and local governments for over 50 years to develop and sustain core homeland security and emergency services capabilities and capacities; and
- WHEREAS,** since 2003, Congress has allocated over \$55 billion in homeland security grant funds to state and local governments, which averages \$3.2 billion per year, while Tribal Nations have only been allocated just over \$95 million (\$5.5 million per year average) in federal homeland security funding during the same period; and
- WHEREAS,** as a direct result of the federal government's ongoing investments, state and local governments were prepared and had the capacity to navigate the complex Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) processes and policies to access billions in COVID-19 emergency relief funds; and
- WHEREAS,** unlike other units of government, Tribal Nations have been continuously behind in securing DHS funding to meet core homeland security and emergency services capabilities and capacities; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribal Nations and Tribal emergency management organizations have limited access to obtain emergency management and response funding directly from DHS, and current funding mechanisms require Tribal Nations and their emergency management organizations to seek funds through state governments; and
- WHEREAS,** the outbreak and continued persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indian Country exemplified the failure of the federal government to uphold its trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations by failing to invest in all Tribal emergency services capabilities and capacity; and

- WHEREAS,** this failure to uphold trust and treaty obligations prevented over 80 percent of Tribal Nations from accessing billions in critical lifesaving, emergency relief funds throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- WHEREAS,** the direct outcome of this historic underfunding of Tribal emergency services programs left Tribal Leaders and government staff overworked, understaffed, and unable or challenged to navigate the complex FEMA process during a pandemic that threatened the public safety and operations of our Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** in order to appropriately prepare Tribal Nations for future emergency and disaster response scenarios Congress must uphold its trust and treaty obligations and fully fund DHS emergency and disaster response programs for Tribal Nations to meet the standards required by the Homeland Security Act (P.L. 107-296) and the Robert T. Stafford Act (P.L. 100-707) as well as those standards developed by FEMA, the National Fire Administration, the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, the independent non-profit Joint Commission, and other public safety organizations; and
- WHEREAS,** that Tribal emergency managers estimate that a minimum of 3 full-time equivalent positions would be required for each Tribal Nation to meet these standards and requirements and could be covered by receiving \$360,000 annually in addition to federal funding for Tribal Nations currently available; and
- WHEREAS,** that this investment by the federal government would help to fulfill its trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations; 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 strongly urges Congress to appropriate at a minimum \$206.64 million to establish a Tribal Resiliency Continuity Program that is non-competitive, no federal cost share, and streamlined at the Department of Homeland Security to empower all Tribal Nations to build core homeland security and emergency services capacities and capabilities.

### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Impact Week Meeting held in Arlington, VA at which a quorum was present on February 7, 2023.



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



Vice Chairwoman Sarah Harris, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
Sovereignty Protection Fund

*Because there is Strength in Unity*