



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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USET Resolution No. 2012:032

SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENT OF THE STAFFORD ACT, TO ALLOW TRIBES TO REQUEST PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATIONS

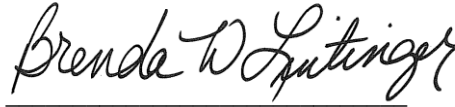
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** Indian Tribes hold a unique status in the United States with the rights and benefits of sovereign nations; and
- WHEREAS,** this relationship has its underpinnings in the U.S. Constitution, specifically, the Indian Commerce Clause, the Treaty Clause and the Supremacy Clause, in numerous treaties between the U.S. and Indian Tribes and through the cession by of vast tracts of Indian lands; and
- WHEREAS,** in recognition of the trust relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes, Tribal governments should be afforded at least the same status as other territories, possessions, and the States; and
- WHEREAS,** Under the Stafford Act, only States through their respective Governors can request a major disaster or emergency declination from the President; and
- WHEREAS,** federally recognized Indian Tribes are excluded from making such a direct request for a President declaration and are forced to make a request through the State in which they are geographically located; and
- WHEREAS,** a change to the law would acknowledge the sovereignty of federally recognized Indian Tribes and enhance U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) working relationship with Tribal Governments; and
- WHEREAS,** FEMA announced on December 7, 2011 the Administration's support for a legislative amendment to the Stafford Act to permit federally recognized Indian Tribes to make disaster declaration requests directly to the President; and therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors reaffirms USET Resolution No. 2001:01 "Request to amend Public Law 93-288 to give American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Governments the same status as the states, possessions and other trust territories of the United States with regard to presidential disaster declarations; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors requests the United States Congress amend the Stafford Act in a manner that is consistent with the Administration's December 7, 2011 letter supporting a legislative amendment that recognizes Tribal sovereignty by granting them the authority to make disaster declaration requests directly to the President.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, on Thursday, February 16, 2012.



Brian Patterson, President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Brenda Lintinger, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

“Because there is strength in Unity”