



## United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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### USET Resolution No. 2012:043

#### **SUPPORT FOR THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAM**

- 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,** American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people carry the heaviest burden of diabetes in the United States, suffering from the highest rates of diabetes in the world. In some AI/AN communities, the diabetes prevalence rate among adults is as high as 60%; and
- WHEREAS,** diabetes is the fourth leading cause of death for AI/AN communities, with a mortality rate 4.8 times higher than the U.S. general population; and
- WHEREAS,** in an attempt to address the diabetes epidemic in Indian Country, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$30 million in the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) of 1997; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Congress authorized the Indian Health Service (IHS) to develop and implement the Special Diabetes Program for Indians utilizing the funds appropriated in the 1997 BBA; and
- WHEREAS,** because diabetes is so prevalent in Indian communities and \$30 million per year was not enough funding to make an adequate impact at the local level, the U.S. Congress appropriated an additional \$70 million in 2001 and another \$50 million in 2002, bringing the total amount available to \$150 million per year through fiscal year 2009, and this was extended in 2008 and 2011 for two additional years, carrying programs through 2013; and
- WHEREAS,** the Special Diabetes Program for Indians has been very successful and results from the programs offer hope for prevention since there is still no cure for diabetes; and
- WHEREAS,** through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians, the average blood sugar levels have decreased a full percentage point since 1996 and research shows that a one unit decrease in A1c levels translates to a 40% reduction in diabetes-related complications such as blindness, kidney failure, nerve disease, and amputations; and
- WHEREAS,** this vital program is scheduled to expire in 2013 and loss of funding would be devastating and even more costly to both Tribal Governments and the Nation because all of the gains made with the current funding would be lost; and
- WHEREAS,** USET member Tribes support reauthorizing the Special Diabetes Program for Indians until 2018 at a level of \$200 million per year for the program, which would increase the funding authorization for the program by \$50 million; and


- WHEREAS,** USET member Tribes understand and are cognizant of the current budget constraints of the Nation however, still feel that a \$50 million per year increase is needed when considering Tribal population growth and factoring in medical inflationary costs; and
- WHEREAS,** reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians is a top priority for USET and Indian Country which is essential to improving the health status of AI/AN people to the highest possible level; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors supports and urges Congress to Reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program at \$200 million per year for an additional 5 years within the 112th Congressional Session.

### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Marksville, LA, on Thursday, May 24, 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”*