



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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USET SPF Resolution No. 2018 SPF:004

SUPPORT FOR REAUTHORIZING THE FARM BILL WITH TRIBAL PROVISIONS

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-seven (27) 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 U.S. Congress is deliberating on the nature of food and agriculture policy for the nation and the world, as it must reauthorize the multiyear Farm Bill in 2018, which governs all farm programs, rural development, and nutrition initiatives within the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and
- WHEREAS,** agriculture is among the largest economic development industries in Indian Country, providing \$3.4 billion per year; and the policies that provide the framework for Indian Country's agriculture production constitute a large portion of the Farm Bill; and
- WHEREAS,** an overwhelming majority of the land throughout Indian Country is involved in agriculture production; and
- WHEREAS,** many Tribal citizens live in rural areas and communities where the cost of building or repairing basic infrastructure systems is often prohibitively high, and the 2018 Farm Bill will provide an authorization of federal funding for rural infrastructure initiatives; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribal citizens in rural areas are often afflicted by poverty of place, where they are unable to find suitable employment to provide adequate income that supports good nutrition for their families; and thus, may rely on federal nutrition programs authorized in the Farm Bill; and
- WHEREAS,** even with the great strides made for Indian Country agriculture in previous Farm Bill negotiations, the \$3.4 billion generated annually through Indian agriculture efforts is still more than 99 percent raw commodities, instead of the healthy, local, economically beneficial, and nutritious food needed in Tribal communities and rural areas; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2018 Farm Bill negotiations, resulting policies, and funding must include and incorporate perspectives from Indian Country to afford parity, opportunity, and consistency under the federal food and agriculture laws, policies, and programs; and
- WHEREAS,** improving programs and funding for Indian Country will help to ensure Tribal governments have the ability to establish long-term plans and goals for their communities and the surrounding rural communities, and help Native farmers and ranchers continue to grow their food businesses and build Tribal food systems to support our economies and communities; and

- WHEREAS,** the 2018 Farm Bill effort being promoted by the Native Farm Bill Coalition is the best opportunity in decades for Indian Country to effectively create positive and truly relevant change in federal agriculture policy to enhance the development of Indian agriculture beyond raw commodities, support infrastructure, research, and education in Tribal communities, and improve federal food nutrition programs in Indian Country while providing Tribal governments the authority manage these programs; 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** that the USET SPF Board of Directors calls upon the U.S. Congress to fulfill its federal trust responsibility to Indian Country during the development and negotiation of the 2018 reauthorization of the Farm Bill to incorporate Tribal parity, opportunity, and consistency throughout, and encourage and support continued participation, development, and progress in Indian Country's agriculture businesses, food systems, infrastructure, and nutrition programs.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Cherokee, NC, October 12, 2017.


Chief Kirk E. Francis, Sr., President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.


Chief Lynn Malerba, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.