



UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

USET Resolution No. 2002:094

REQUEST FOR A TEMPORARY WAIVER OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE FROM THE "ONE HHS" INITIATIVE

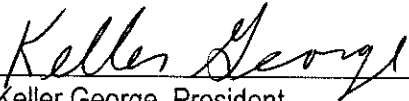
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-four (24) federally recognized tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Tommy Thompson has instituted an initiative to design and implement a "One HHS" initiative; and
- WHEREAS,** the Indian Health Service (IHS) is unique when compared to other operating divisions within the DHHS and is the only operating division responsible for providing direct health care services to a special population consisting of sovereign nations that are entitled to communication on a government-to-government basis; and
- WHEREAS,** there has not been adequate tribal consultation regarding the "One HHS" initiative even though the ramifications of implementation are far-reaching and will directly affect the manner in which services are provided to American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) people by tribal health care facilities; and
- WHEREAS,** to better understand the "One HHS" initiative and respond to the directives of the DHHS Secretary the IHS convened a Restructuring Initiative Workgroup (RIW); and
- WHEREAS,** the RIW issued a draft report regarding the "One HHS" initiative, as well as other important topics related to restructuring the IHS to meet the requirements of the "One HHS" initiative or to request waivers from sections of the "One HHS" initiative for specific reasons; and
- WHEREAS,** the "One HHS" is in the first stages of being implemented as evidenced by the consolidation of forty personnel offices into four personnel offices and the implied absorption of the IHS Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs into the Office of the Secretary, DHHS; and
- WHEREAS,** the RIW strongly opposes consolidating the IHS personnel offices into the DHHS for the simple reason that this movement will repeal the Indian Preference Policy currently followed by the IHS when hiring or promoting employees; and
- WHEREAS,** the RIW strongly opposes absorbing the IHS Office Congressional and Legislative Affairs into the Office of the Secretary, DHHS because this action will have a negative impact on the government-to-government relationship between American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal governments and the federal government; and
- WHEREAS,** the RIW does support some aspects of the "One HHS" initiative such as combining the financial management systems and possibly some data systems; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors respectfully requests a temporary waiver for the IHS from the "One HHS" initiative until such time as adequate tribal consultation has been conducted by the DHHS in accordance with the Tribal Consultation and Participation Policy; and, be it further

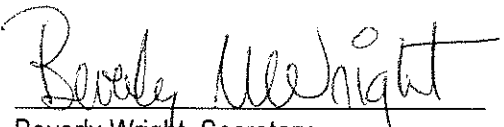
"Because there is strength in Unity"

RESOLVED the USET Board of Directors requests the DHHS to honor the government-to-government relationship by allowing tribal governments sufficient time to review and comment on the RIW draft report.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Nashville, TN, Thursday, June 13, 2002.


Keller George, President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.


Beverly Wright, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.