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**Randi Lone Eagle**

Summit Lake Paiute Tribe

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Larry Wright, Jr.**

Ponca Tribe of Nebraska



## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #NO-23-057

**TITLE: Establishing a White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom**

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, the cultural, ceremonial, and spiritual well being of American Indian and Alaska Native Peoples (AI/AN) was deemed a founding principle when NCAI was formed 80 years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, religious freedom is an inherent right for all people, guaranteed by the first amendment of the United States Constitution and affirmed under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, NCAI recognizes the need for heightened implementation of the 45-year-old American Indian Religious Freedom Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the NCAI Peyote Working Group has worked to create a consultative and inclusive proposed Executive Order to address the need for fuller implementation of the declaration contained within the AIRFA statute which makes it the policy of the United States to “protect and preserve American Indian and Alaska Native Religions”; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Executive Order includes the following provisions: 1) policy statement 2) mobilization of executive agencies to provide support for Free Exercise 3) establishment of an interagency working group through the WHCNA 4) establishment of a White House Initiative Office.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NCAI does hereby support and endorse the proposed Executive Order submitted by the NCAI Peyote Working Group (included); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI does declare the condition of American Indian and Alaska Native peoples religions and ceremonial practices as vulnerable and urges the White House to adopt this proposed Executive Order; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

#### CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2023 Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held November 12-17, 2023, in New Orleans, Louisiana, with a quorum present.



Mark Macarro, President

**ATTEST:**



Nickolaus Lewis, Recording Secretary

**Addendum to Resolution NO-23-057****WORKING DRAFT****EXECUTIVE ORDER****ESTABLISHING WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE on ADVANCING EQUITY,  
PROTECTION, and PRESERVATION of AMERICAN INDIAN and  
ALASKA NATIVE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, in furtherance of Federal treaties, in order to protect and preserve Indian religious practices, in order to reduce the impositions and barriers preventing the full exercise of Indian religious freedoms and to enhance collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have implications on the fullest expression of Indian religious freedom, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Policy.** The United States has a unique political and legal relationship with federally recognized Tribal Nations, as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, statutes, treaties, Executive Orders, Administrative rules, and judicial decisions. The Federal Government is committed to protecting the rights and ensuring the well-being of Tribal Nations while honoring Tribal sovereignty and inherent rights of self-determination. No right is more crucial to Tribal Nations than the right to free exercise of their religious and ceremonial beliefs. In recognition of the Federal government's commitment to free exercise and the policy declaration contained within the 1978, 1994 (amended) American Indian Religious Freedom Act the Federal government has a solemn duty Tribal Nations. The entire Federal government and the executive departments and agencies are duty bound to advance religious, ceremonial protection, preservation and equity of Tribal Nations and their members to practice their religious and ceremonial beliefs.

Each executive branch agency with statutory or administrative responsibility will engage in government-to-government coordination with Tribal Nations to identify barriers to Tribal religious free exercise. The agencies will further engage in meaningful Tribal consultation to evaluate the implementation of the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

For more than two centuries the United States promulgated policies designed to eradicate American Indian and Alaska Native religions and ceremonies. The federally supported boarding schools were not just designed to assimilate Native Children, they were designed to eliminate the transmission of intergenerational religious and ceremonial practices. The Federally funded assimilation and corresponding proselytization of Native children is repudiated by my Administration.



It is the policy of my Administration to advance equity, protection, and preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native religious and ceremonial practices to further Tribal self-governance, Tribal sovereignty, and Tribal well-being. My Administration will aid the expansion of opportunities and provide avenues to assure Tribal religious and ceremonial free exercise by collaborating with Tribal nations and their ceremonial practitioners to identify and remove barriers. This will include the advancement of voluntary public private partnerships to ensure access to sacred lands, plant medicines, ceremonial herbs, ceremonial sites, and traditional foods. My Administration will heighten interagency coordination to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of sacred lands including identifying federal investments on private land that destroy or diminish the integrity of sacred sites, sacred lands, and the plant medicines and ceremonial herbs that grown on such lands.

It is the policy of my Administration to revitalize Native languages which are inextricably linked to the fullest practice of Tribal religious free exercise. My Administration is committed to advancing [traditional ecological knowledge](#), this Administration acknowledges the importance of this knowledge which is a precursor to American Indian religious freedom.

My Administration recognizes the heroic unparalleled patriotic service of American Indian and Alaska Native veterans who fought for and defended liberties and freedom throughout the world that they themselves did not enjoy here in America.

To these ends my Administration is committed to the fullest implementation of the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act and commits to carrying out our trust responsibility under this statute. This order establishes a means to better coordinate, increase engagement and expand opportunity to sustain prosperous and resilient Tribal communities.

**Section 2.** *Establishment of the White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom*

- (a) There is established in the Department of the Interior within Indian Affairs the White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom (Initiative).
- (b) This initiative is to ensure the free exercise of American Indian and Alaska Native religious and ceremonial practices, to protect and preserve all American Indian and Alaska Native religions and ceremonial practices, and to fulfill our commitment to our Federal trust obligations to all Tribal Nations pursuant to our respect and recognition of Tribal sovereignty.
- (c) The Initiative shall be led by three co-chairs whom, shall be the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, and U.S. Attorney General. The Secretary of the Interior shall, in consultation with the other co-chairs of the initiative, designate an Executive Director for the Initiative. The Executive Director will chair a new committee (Committee) of the White House Council on American Indian Affairs (WHCAIA), established by Executive Order 13647 on June 26, 2013. The Committee will have a purview surrounding religious, ceremonial issues, sacred sites, cultural and language issues, public private partnerships in protection of sacred lands, and

implementation of existing statutes and greater Tribal Nation inclusion in Federal programs and initiatives.

(d) The Initiative or committee shall consult and engage in meaningful consultations throughout Indian Country in collaboration with Tribal Nations, Alaska Native entities, religious and ceremonial leaders (medicine men and medicine women), historic representative bodies of federally recognized Tribal Native American Churches (Peyote practitioners), Tribal Historic Preservation officers, elders and designated surrogates of Tribal Nations, federally recognized Tribal researchers/scholars to advance equity, protection and preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native religious freedom by furthering the following policy goals:

(1) Breaking down barriers and impediments to Tribal religious and ceremonial free exercise including access to medicines, prayer sites, sacred lands, and traditional foods.

(2) Strengthening the capacity of volunteer public private partnerships and their access to Federal programs that invest in conservation strategies, encourage and develop Federal partnerships with public, private, philanthropic, and non-profit entities to improve access to sacred lands, sites, and culturally significant landscapes.

(3) Creating opportunities for strategic partnerships and coordination among agencies and working closely with the Executive Office of the President on key Administration priorities related to Tribal religious and ceremonial free exercise.

(4) Serving as a liaison with other agencies, advise those agencies on implementation and enforcement of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act

(5) Monitoring state incursions on the American Indian Religious Freedom Act through legislative proposals such as legalization and/or decriminalization of Peyote (*Lophophora williamsii*) and mescaline (3,4,5-trimethoxyphenethylamine).

(6) Collaborating with states, private landowners, Tribes, conservationists, Tribal researchers/scholars and other interested parties toward shared stewardship of sacred sites, medicines and traditional food ecosystems, culturally significant sites and sacred lands that respects private property rights, Tribal sovereignty, and state interest in wildlife management.

(7) Prioritizing Tribally led opportunities to establish new conservation efforts that protect and restore sacred lands, sites, medicine, ceremonial habitat, culturally significant places.

(8) Exploring policies that have Tribal implications and legislative proposals to expand opportunities for Tribal Nations' inclusion in Federal programs for the purpose of conserving sacred lands, places, sites, and culturally significant places.

(9) Furthering Tribal sovereignty by supporting efforts to cooperatively identify Tribal nations unique religious, ceremonial, and cultural needs, concerns, and viewpoints. Using the instruments of the Federal government to address these needs as permitted by law.

(10) increasing the understanding of systemic causes preventing access and protection of sacred places, lands, sites, medicines and traditional foods and protection of these places.

(c) To fulfill its mission and objectives, the Initiative (or Committee), shall be consistent with applicable law:

(1) Engage in regular and meaningful consultation with Tribal Nations and religious ceremonial practitioners who are appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion and a federally recognized Tribal Nation.

(2) Develop, lead, and coordinate the Administration's policy agenda affecting American Indian religious freedom. Ensuring that policy decisions and programs throughout the Federal government are consistent with the Policy set forth in Section 1 of this order, the AIRFA of 1978, 1994, and EO 13175 Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments.

(3) Report concerns and solutions and recommend policy options to the Administration leadership and WHCAIA for assisting, strengthening, and replicating partnerships.

**Section 3. *Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Federal Engagement Practices and Reporting.***

(a) Section 2 of this Order establishes the co-chairs, Executive Director and committee of the WHCAIA. Each executive branch agency with statutory or Administrative responsibility shall promote the policy in section (1) of this order and to implement and enforce the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, including but not limited to, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Department of Justice, Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, Office of Management and Budget, Environmental Protection Agency, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Drug Enforcement Administration, Food and Drug Administration, Bureau of Indian Education, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Domestic Policy Council Advisory and Council on Historic Preservation.

(b) Within 120 days of the effective date of this order relevant Executive agencies will develop written plans for evaluating implementation of the 1978, 1994 American Indian Religious Freedom Act. These same agencies will further provide a schedule for meaningful consultation with Tribal Nations to ascertain their viewpoints on implementation of AIRFA both successes and recommendations for heightened implementation of the statute. Within six months the Administration will have completed the first round of Tribal Nation consultations and within one year the Initiative will have issued a report containing findings from Tribal nation consultations and Executive agencies internal evaluation of the Administrations implementation of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act securing the first review of the statute in 45 years.

(c) To further the goals of the Initiative and the policy objectives in Section 1, the Initiative shall monitor and evaluate each Federal agency's progress to ensure that its "Agency Plan" includes measurables and action-oriented goals.

(d) The Department of Interior shall provide funding and administrative support for the Initiative, to the extent permitted by law.

(e) Each relevant agency with representation on the WHCNAA shall prepare a plan (Agency Plan) outlining measurable actions the agency will take to both implement fully AIRFA and support maximum feasible Tribal religious free exercise and report to the Co-Chairs of the Initiative and the Director of the Initiative.

(f) Each participating agency shall bear its own expenses for participating in the Initiative.

**Section 4. Definitions.** For purposes of this order:

(a) “Tribal Nation” “Indian Tribe” means an American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges as a federally recognized Tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. 5130,5131.

(b) “Tribal Official” means elected or duly appointed officials of Indian Tribal governments or authorized intertribal organizations.

(c) “Native American” and “Native” mean members of one or more federally recognized Tribal Nation as defined in 4(a) above.

(d) “Indian Country” means land that is located within the exterior boundaries of an Indian reservation.

(e) “Agency” means any authority of the United States that is an “agency” under 44 U.S.C. 502 (1), other than those considered to be independent regulatory agencies, as defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(5).

(f) “Tribal Religious Free Exercise” means American Indian Alaska Native religious and ceremonial freedom.

(g) “Ceremonial Practitioners” means enrolled members of federally recognized Tribes, Tribes who are authorized or ordained to practice, or lead bona fide Tribal ceremonies.

(h) “Historic Representative Bodies of the Native American Church” means long standing democratic organizations who are practitioners of the Peyote religion/ceremony and advocates on behalf of their respective constituency base.

(i) “Policies that have Tribal implications” refers to regulations, legislative comments or proposed legislation, and other policy statements or actions that have substantial direct effects on one or more Indian Tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes.

(j) “Sacred site(s), lands” and “Culturally significant places/lands” means any specific and or geographic area, landscape, bodies of water, place on Federal,

state, Tribal or private land that is identified by an Indian Tribe(s) or individual Indian determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion.

**Section 5. *General Provisions.*** (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

- (1) The authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or
- (2) The functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relate to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.
- (3) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.





## **2024 Midyear Convention Canyonville, Oregon**

### **RESOLUTION #24 – 16**

#### **“SUPPORT FOR ESTABLISHING A WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON ADVANCING EQUITY, PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE RELIGIOUS AND CEREMONIAL RIGHTS”**

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978 and AIRFA Peyote amendments of 1994 were enacted in order to ensure free exercise to American Indian practitioners of the Peyote ceremonies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Congressional intent of AIRFA included the preservation and protection of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian, religions, traditions, ceremonies; and

**WHEREAS**, there exist numerous barriers to the fullest expression of free exercise including access to sacred sites, medicine, food and clean water; and

**WHEREAS**, a lack of enforcement of AIRFA and lack of clear policy goals linked to AIRFA have led to the continuance of barriers preventing free exercise; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians Peyote Task Force, Native American Church of North America in a consultative and collaborative process have adopted a draft Proposed Executive Order (draft EO) entitled "*Establishing White House Initiative On Advancing Equity, Protection, And Preservation Of American Indian And Alaska Native Religious Freedom*"; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft EO aims to strengthen the implementation of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft EO establishes:

- 1) Policy Statement
- 2) Mobilize Executive Agencies
- 3) Establish Interagency Working Group through WHCNA
- 4) Establish White House Initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, this resolution is offered in loving memory and honor of Ted Strong (Yakama) and Dave Matheson (Coeur d'Alene); now

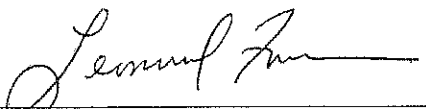
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI affirms its support for the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Peyote amendments of 1994; and

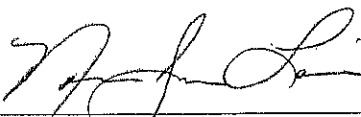
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI supports the enclosed draft proposed Executive Order entitled "*Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, And Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom*"; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2024 Midyear Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Seven Feathers Casino in Canyonville, OR, May 19 – May 23, 2024 with a quorum present.

  
Leonard Forsman, President

  
Norma Jean Louie, Secretary



**UNITED TRIBES OF NORTH DAKOTA  
RESOLUTION  
RESOLUTION NO. 23-10-01**

**TITLE: Resolution in favor of Executive Order Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom.**

**WHEREAS,** United Tribes of North Dakota ("United Tribes") is the inter-tribal association of the five federally recognized Tribes co-located with North Dakota, each of which has a government-to-government relationship with the United States government established by Treaty, including the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, the Spirit Lake Tribe, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, the Three Affiliated Tribes, and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, with a Board of Directors composed of the Chairman and once council member from each member Tribe; and

**WHEREAS,** United Tribes, founded in 1968, exists to further the common goals of the Indian Tribes and Nations co-located within North Dakota; and

**WHEREAS,** United Tribes has reviewed the working draft of the "Executive Order Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom" (hereinafter the "Executive Order") which is endorsed by the Native American Church of North America and the National Congress of American Indians Peyote Task Force; and

**WHEREAS,** The Executive Order seeks to establish policies designed to aid in the protection of rights of Tribal Nations while honoring Tribal sovereignty on all matters, including, but not limited to, Tribal Nations' rights to freely exercise religious and ceremonial beliefs; and

**WHEREAS,** United Tribes supports the implementation of the Executive Order and believes that such is necessary to further the common goals of the Indian Tribes and Nations co-located within North Dakota.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** That the Board of Directors of the United Tribes of North Dakota does provide general support for the adoption and implementation of the Executive Order Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That this Resolution of Support is contingent upon the final draft of the Executive Order being substantially consistent with the

working draft that was presented to the Board of Directors of the United Tribes of North Dakota on October 6, 2023.

### CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing resolution was duly passed at a meeting of the Board of Directors of United Tribes at which a quorum was present, held on the 6th day of October, 2023, with a vote of 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 2 not present.



Jamie Azure  
Chairman, Board of Directors  
United Tribes of North Dakota

ATTEST:



ReNa Little-Lohnes  
Secretary, Board of Directors  
United Tribes of North Dakota





# GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Mailing Address: US Post Office Box 988, Rapid City, SD 57709

## GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION (GPTCA)

### RESOLUTION

**THE GPTCA HEREBY CALLS UPON THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION TO  
ADOPT A WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON THE PRESERVATION AND  
PROTECTION OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE CEREMONIES,  
TRADITIONAL PRACTICES, AND RELIGIONS.**

#### **Resolution No. – 02-09-08-2023**

**WHEREAS**, The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association (GPTCA) is composed of the elected Chairs and Presidents or their duly appointed representatives of the sovereign Indian Tribes and Nations recognized by Treaties with the United States that are within the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association was formed to promote the common interests of the Great Plains Sovereign Indian Tribes and their members in the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska; and

**WHEREAS**, through treaties, statutes, U.S. constitutional policies, and judicial decrees, the United States assumed a legal responsibility to protect Indian Tribes, provide services, guarantee the right of tribal self-government, guarantee the protection and safety of tribal members, guarantee the right of culturally appropriate education for members of Indian tribes, and promote the viability of Indian reservations as permanent homelands for Tribal nations; and

**WHEREAS**, August 11, 1978, The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) was signed into law by President Carter. Declaring that it is the policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiians, including but not limited to access to sites, use, and possession of sacred objects and freedom to worship through ceremonies and traditional rites; and

**WHEREAS**, the 45th anniversary of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act should be celebrated by both the Biden Administration and Congress. In commemorating AIRFA, the Biden Administration has an opportunity to fully implement the policy declaration contained within AIRFA and review the effectiveness of AIRFA, the Executive branch agency's responsiveness to AIRFA, and measure through tribal consultation the viewpoints of Indian Tribes and their members concerning AIRFA; and

**WHEREAS**, by examining AIRFA, the Biden Administration would be the first Administration to assess and review AIRFA since the Carter administration; and

**WHEREAS**, AIRFA lacks enforcement mechanisms containing "no" cause for action within the statute, making administrative engagement necessary to fulfill the promise of AIRFA; and

**WHEREAS**, there exists conflicting information regarding the interpretation, trust corpus, and policy implementation within the various federal agencies concerning AIRFA; and

**WHEREAS**, the Native American Church of North America (Peyote Practitioners) and National Congress of American Indians Peyote Taskforce have authored a proposed Executive Order that would sharpen the focus of the Administration and create administrative lead interagency collaboration to address statutory conflicts and policy incongruence challenging American Indian free exercise of religion; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association does hereby support and endorses the enclosed proposed Executive Order titled **"Establishing a White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom."**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that GPTCA request that the Biden Administration advance this proposed initiative or a similar Executive Order containing shared policy directives and interagency collaboration; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the GPTCA does hereby celebrate and honor the 45th anniversary of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, GPTCA encourages the Biden Administration and Congress to commemorate this landmark legislation in kind; and


**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be the policy of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association unless and until it is withdrawn by subsequent resolution.

**Resolution No. - 02-09-08-2023**

**CERTIFICATION**

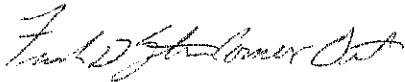
**This resolution was enacted at a duly called meeting of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc. held at Bismarck, ND on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at which a quorum was established, 9 members voting in favor, 0 members opposed, 0 members abstaining, and 7 members not present.**

**Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of September 2023**



**President Tony Reider, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe,  
Secretary, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc.**

**Attest:**



**President Frank Star Comes Out, Oglala Sioux Tribe  
Chairman, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc.**



# Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

2929 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. North, Suite 300, Billings, Montana 59101

Ph: (406) 252-2550

Fax: (406) 254-6355

April 11, 2024

Neera Tanden  
Director, Domestic Policy Council  
Executive Office of the President  
1650 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20504

Rose Petoskey  
Senior Advisor to the White House  
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and  
Director of Tribal Affairs  
New Executive Office Building  
Washington, DC 20504

Anthony Morgan Rodman  
Executive Director  
White House Council on Native American Affairs

Director Tanden,

Please accept this correspondence as an enthusiastic endorsement by the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council <https://www.rmtlc.org> of the proposed Executive Order (EO) titled ***“Establishing a White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religions and ceremonial Freedoms”***.

This proposed EO is a result of consultative work done by the National Congress of American Indians “Peyote Task Force”. Shoshone Bannock Chairman Lee Juan Tyler Teton, and Northern Arapaho Councilman Keenon Groesbeck participated in the formation of this proposal. Important to Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council is the history and kinship to the Peyote ceremony by the Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boy, Crow Tribe, Eastern Shoshone, Shoshone Bannock of Ft. Hall and Northern Arapaho. Many of our other RMTLC member tribes have individual citizens who are members of the Peyote ceremony, and thousands of our collective tribal members still practice traditional tribal ceremonies and religions. This requires medicines, access to sacred places, and an advocacy agenda by the federal government to fully implement the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.



The Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council is proud to join the National Congress of American Indians, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen Association, United Tribes of North Dakota and the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma in endorsing this proposed Executive Order.

We commend the Biden Administration for significant steps towards greater Free Exercise such as the **Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies** and corresponding **Implementation Memorandum**, the recent release of the **Best Practice Guide For Federal Agencies Regarding Tribal and Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites, the Haaland Secretarial Order of Tribal Co-Management of Federal Lands** and finally the unprecedented investment in Native Language revitalization. These significant policy directives can be enhanced and operationalized with greater impact with support from the proposed EO.

The American Indian Religious Freedom Act is now in its 45<sup>th</sup> year and we are marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its 1994 amendments that legalized Peyote for American Indian practitioners of the Native American Church. The anniversary of these hard-fought Indian country victories offers an important opportunity for the Biden Administration to celebrate with us the anniversaries of these crucial statutes, review the Administration's implementation of the statute and reinvigorated the federal government's policy declaration to protect and preserve American Indian and Alaska Native religions and ceremonies.

I thank you for all of the hard work you have done on these crucial issues and pledge our support to help this Administration remove the last barriers to Free Exercise.

Respectfully,



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Bryce kirk (Apr 11, 2024 16:19 MDT)

Bryce Kirk, Chairman  
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

# Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Freedom of Religion (002)

Final Audit Report

2024-04-11

Created:	2024-04-11
By:	William Snell (william.snell@rmtlc.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAOS7epiXawcqff_snUvRL41SMZilgDPOs

## "Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Freedom of Religion (002)" History



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2024-04-11 - 9:32:58 PM GMT



Email viewed by bryce.kirk@fortpecktribes.net

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Signer bryce.kirk@fortpecktribes.net entered name at signing as Bryce kirk

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Document e-signed by Bryce kirk (bryce.kirk@fortpecktribes.net)

Signature Date: 2024-04-11 - 10:19:13 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 70.33.50.204



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## UNITED INDIAN NATIONS OF OKLAHOMA

### RESOLUTION NO. 2024-01

A Resolution in Support of the Native American Church of North America, Inc. (NACNA) legislative and legal initiatives to protect and preserve American Indian Medicines (Peyote and other traditional medicines), Ceremonies, Language, Sacred Sites, and Cultural Practices

WHEREAS, the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma (UINO) is an organization established to protect the inherent sovereignty and self-determination of all Tribal Nations based in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, UINO seeks to safeguard the laws and treaties that benefit Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens and to help improve government-to-government relations among Tribal Nations in Oklahoma, the United States, and the State of Oklahoma; and  
WHEREAS, UINO strives to protect the ceremonial, cultural, religious rights and access and usage of sacred sites of its member Indian Nations; and

WHEREAS, religious freedom is an inherent right for all people, guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and affirmed under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978; and

WHEREAS, UINO recognizes the need to strengthen the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA); and

WHEREAS, UINO opposes the decriminalization and patent of Peyote, its derivatives, and for any synthetic variants drawn from Peyote to include but not limited to Mescaline; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Peyote Working Group and the Native American Church of North American, Inc. has worked to create the proposed Executive Order Establishing a White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom to address the need for fuller implementation of the declaration contained within the AIRFA statute which makes it the policy of the United States to "protect and preserve American Indian and Alaska Native Religions"; and

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United Indian Nations of Oklahoma

P O Box 766 | Jenks OK 74037 | [www.UINOKlahoma.com](http://www.UINOKlahoma.com) 918-914-1491





WHEREAS, the proposed Executive Order includes the following provisions: 1) policy statement, 2) mobilization of executive agencies to provide support for Free Exercise, 3) establishment of an interagency working group through the White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNA), 4) establishment of a White House Initiative Office.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, UINO supports the Draft Executive Order, Establishing White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection, and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious Freedom; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that UINO does declare the condition of American Indians and Alaska Native peoples' religions and ceremonial practices as vulnerable and urges the White House to adopt this proposed Executive Order; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that UINO leadership and staff are authorized and directed to take any other appropriate action to advance the equity, protection, and preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the Policy of UINO until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

#### CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma membership in Bartlesville, Oklahoma on this 19th day of March 2024, with a quorum present.

Chief Ben Barnes, Chairman

#### ATTEST

Principal Chief David Hill, Recording Secretary

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Coalition of Large Tribes

Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon  
Crow Nation • Duck Valley Indian Reservation Eastern Shoshone Tribe  
Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe  
Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe  
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation  
Spokane Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe • Walker River Paiute

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**Resolution: March-9-2024-Resolution #05-2024 (Las Vegas, NV)**

**Resolution of COLT Support for Establishing a White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Protection and Preservation of American Indian and Alaska Native Religious and Ceremonial Freedom.**

**WHEREAS**, the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) was formally established in early April 2011, and is comprised of Tribes with large land base, including the Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon • Crow Nation • Eastern Shoshone Tribe • Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe • Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe • Shoshone Bannock Tribes • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation • Spokane Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe • Walker River Paiute Tribe and is Chaired by Marvin Weatherwax, Blackfeet Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT was organized to provide a unified advocacy base on all issues affecting Tribes that govern large trust land bases and that strive to ensure the most beneficial use of those lands for tribes and individual Indian landowners; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT Tribes are some of the last Native language speaking Tribes, with high participation in cultural, ceremonial, religious practices. These spiritual practices are tied to sacred places where medicines, foods, and natural resources; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT Tribes hold significant interest in off-reservation sacred places and sites that are on federal, state and private land. These sacred places are often inaccessible and require public-private partnerships to allow for free exercise of American Indian religions; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT Tribes have diverse religious and ceremonial practices spanning thousands of unique ceremonies and protocols. A unifying ceremony practiced by a super majority of COLT Tribes is the Peyote ceremony, also known as the Native American Church; and



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**WHEREAS**, Tribes who are now members of COLT supported both the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) and the 1994 AIRFA amendments which protected members of federally recognized Indian tribes in their legal use of Peyote as a sacrament; and

**WHEREAS**, AIRFA is now in its 45<sup>th</sup> year and we are celebrating the 1994 amendments' 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we observe there is a profound need to review, in coordination with Tribal Nations, the implementation of AIRFA in order to assess its successes and advance policy proposals that will remove persistent barriers to free exercise; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Initiative in the form of an Executive Order was drafted by members of the Native American Church who are members of COLT Tribes. The proposed Executive Order has been vetted throughout Indian Country, including before the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, United Tribes of North Dakota, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, United Indian Nations of Oklahoma and the National Congress of American Indians; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT has long championed such protections including, for example, opposing legalization of mescaline, as indistinguishable from peyote, because such legalization would decimate traditional Native American Church practitioners' access to peyote; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) supports the proposed White House Initiative and corresponding Executive Order (attached hereto); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, COLT supports Tribally-driven efforts from both federally recognized Indian Tribes and historic democratic representative bodies of the Native American Church in peyote land restoration, medicine access and advisement to agencies surrounding the removal of barriers to the fullest Free Exercise of American Indian religious freedom; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, COLT encourages efforts that are Indigenous led and owned, that ensure that Indigenous cultural knowledge and practices are being preserved and shared in ways that honor ancestral wisdom, and that enjoy the maximum available legal protections; and



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**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of COLT until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

Attest:

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Marvin Weatherwax, Chairman, Coalition of Large Tribes

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Crystalyne Curley, Secretary, Coalition of Large Tribes

#### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was enacted at a duly called meeting of the Coalition of Large Tribes held in Las Vegas, Nevada within the home state of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation on March 9, 2024 at which a quorum was present, with the resolution approved unanimously.

Dated this March 9, 2024.