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NIEA RESOLUTION 08-10

TITLE: URGING OF REVERSAL OF PRESIDENT BUSH ADMINISTRATION INTERPRETATION OF CONTINUING RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS FOR FUNDING FY 2009 PROGRAMS THROUGH MARCH 6, 2009

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its' unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, Congress has the responsibility to enact legislation that appropriate funds for operation of the federal government prior to October 1 of the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, Congress failed to enact funding bills for FY 2009 for most departments of government, including the Department of the Interior, prior to October 1 of the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the administration of President George W. Bush has determined that the CR means that his administration can fund programs at the lower of the amount he requested his budget or the amount appropriated for programs in FY 2008; and

WHEREAS, this decision was verified by George Skibine, acting Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, on Monday, October 20, 2008, at the NCAI Annual Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, in answer to a question from a Tribal leader about programs such as the Housing Improvement Program, general assistance and Johnson O'Malley, programs that have been cut from the President's budget in several successive years, but which have been refunded by Congress for each fiscal year in which the President has requested zero funding for these projects; and

WHEREAS, there are many other worthy programs in the Department of Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs budget alone that benefit Indian Tribes and their citizens for which no funding was requested by the President in his FY 2009 budget or whose funding was drastically cut which are severely affected by the President's interpretation of the Congressional CR, and that have been continually funded by Congress for many years, such as United Tribes Technical College, Navajo Technical College, land consolidation, scholarships, road maintenance,

economic development efforts, contract support costs and other education and natural resource programs; and

WHEREAS, many of these long-standing programs are dependent on continuing funding being available for providing services and paying personnel responsible for providing those services, and do not have a funding cushion on which they can rely until Congress positively enacts appropriation legislation for the various departments of the United States government, and will have to lay off workers and diminish services until Congress acts, unless this issue is resolved immediately; and

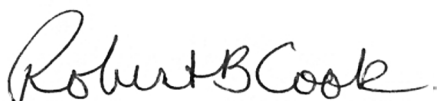
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Indian Education Association requests that the interpretation given by the George W. Bush administration of the Continuing Resolution of Congress funding the government through March 6, 2009 be reversed and that programs that have continuously been funded by Congress remain funded through March 6, 2009, including all of the programs mentioned herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the National Indian Education Association requests the appropriate Congressional representatives and Senators of the Appropriations Committee to further look into this matter and ensure that vital programs in Indian country as mentioned above are funded at their FY 2008 rate as provided in the Continuing Resolutions of Congress; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution, or until the funds for programs that were funding in FY 2008 are restored for the period of October 1, 2008 to March 6, 2009.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was duly considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 26, 2008 at which a quorum of the membership was present.



Robert Cook (2008-2009)
President
National Indian Education Association