



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NIEA Resolution 2014-10

TITLE: HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS OF KAAGOOWU, THE LATE DR. WILLIAM DEMMERT, BY SUPPORTING THE NATIVE LANGUAGE IMMERSION STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ACT

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 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 Native, 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 Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu was Tlingit and Oglala Lakota, received his Ph.D. in education from Harvard in 1973, and was a clan member of the Eagle Clan of the Tlingit; and

WHEREAS, he was a lifelong champion of Native language and educational issues; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu was a founding member of NIEA and contributed to NIEA through board participation, developing the artwork for the seal of NIEA, and participating in general Indian education policy advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu had collaborated with U.S. Senators Walter Mondale and Ted Kennedy, as well as Dr. Will Antell NIEA President, and as NIEA board secretary, he ensured that American Indians were actively involved in the legislative process in order to advance the historic 1972 Indian Education Act thus making Kaagoowu the first American Indian to develop a piece of federal Indian legislation; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu became in 1973 the first Deputy Commissioner of the U.S. Office of Indian Education in the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and simultaneously served as the Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the U.S. Department of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu was the principal author of the groundbreaking Indian Nations At Risk Report and leader in organizing the White House Conference on Indian Education; and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu received the prestigious NIEA Educator of the Year Award in 1977, NIEA Life Time Achievement Award in 2004, and received the posthumous honor of NIEA naming its immersion recognition in his name, the Dr. William G. Demmert Cultural Freedom Award; and

Whereas, Kaagoowu authored many NIEA resolutions promoting immersion instruction and culturally based education including resolutions that support immersion funding in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); and

WHEREAS, Kaagoowu promoted to the NIEA Board in 2008-2009 a legislative proposal to create a new Part D of Title VII that would support American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian immersion schools; and

WHEREAS, this legislative proposal became the basis for NIEA ESEA reauthorization recommendations addressing immersion provisions which were promoted in NIEA congressional testimony and briefing papers; and

WHEREAS, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) Chairman Jon Tester has introduced the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act, S. 1948, and the SCIA has passed this legislation out of committee and hot lined the bill, and Representatives Tom Cole and Betty McCollum have co-sponsored an identical companion bill H.R. 4214 in the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act would create a new grant program in Indian Education Title VII to support American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian immersion schools; and

WHEREAS, there is broad based support for this legislation including the following inter-tribal organizations: National Congress of American Indians, Alaska Federation of Natives, Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association, Coalition of Large Tribes, Montana Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, Navajo Nation, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, United Tribes of Michigan, United South and Eastern Tribes, Affiliated Tribes Northwest Indians, and United Tribes of North Dakota representing over 2million American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian citizens; and

WHEREAS, numerous Native language advocacy organizations and Indian education organizations have endorsed the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association honors and recognizes the remarkable lifetime work, efforts, and accomplishments of Kaagoowu (Dr. William Demmert) and respectfully request that the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act be renamed to include Dr. William Demmert's name in the long title of the bill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association supports the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act and directs the NIEA board and its Executive

Director to pursue passage of this legislation in the 113th Congress and future congressional sessions until the bill becomes law.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 18, 2014 at which a quorum of the membership was present.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Melvin E. Monette". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Melvin Monette
President