



2014 AFN Convention Resolutions

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Alaska Federation of Natives
2014 Annual Convention
Resolution 14 – 45

- TITLE:** INCREASING THE SAFETY OF ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 165 federally-recognized tribes, 146 village corporations, 12 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** we, the members of the Alaska Federation of Natives, 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 Native nations, rights and benefits secured and to which we are entitled consistent with the federal trust responsibility and government-to-government relations, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of Alaska Native tribes and people, to defend centuries old Native customs and traditions that have survived contact with foreign governments, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of Native people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and
- WHEREAS:** Alaska Native peoples honor, respect, and hold sacred Native women; retain our inherent right to live according to our life-affirming customs and traditions which regulates respectful boundaries for all of our relationships; and
- WHEREAS:** Alaska is home to 229 or 40% of federally recognized tribes; one Native village-based women’s shelter, the Emmonak Women’s Shelter, operating since 1979; one tribal nonprofit domestic violence and sexual assault coalition, the Yup’ik Women’s Coalition operating since 2006; and the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center, a nonprofit dedicated to ending violence against women; and only 78 villages are served by State law enforcement who need culturally appropriate training on how to work with tribes and Native peoples; and
- WHEREAS:** the Federal government has a trust responsibility to Alaska Native tribes and should consult with Alaska Native tribes on violence against Native women; and
- WHEREAS:** the findings, including the statistics from Chapter 2 of the Indian Law and Order Commission Report released November 2013, entitled Reforming Justice for Alaska Natives: The Time Is Now, provide compelling justification for immediate implementation of the Report’s recommendations; and
- WHEREAS:** the Commission Report statistics include the following: Alaska Natives are disproportionately affected by crime, and these effects are felt most strongly in Native communities, including Alaska Native women over-represented in the domestic violence victim population by 250 percent, Native women represent 47 percent of reported rapes or at least seven times the non-Native rate, and in Native villages, reported rates of domestic violence are up to 10 times higher than the rest of the United States; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native villages suffer disproportionately from crimes rooted in a disruption of Native customs and traditions, which is evident with the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence, alcohol/substance abuse, suicide, homicide, teen pregnancy, removal and separation of children from their families, and diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and cirrhosis of the liver; and

WHEREAS: the rates of missing and murdered Alaska Native women and women and girls have been ignored by the current health and justice systems and law enforcement; and

WHEREAS: given the high rates of crimes and other issues, an equitable formula set aside for Alaska Native tribal governments is required of Federal and state resources for tribes to develop, implement and sustain local, culturally relevant solutions to immediately and comprehensively address the health, safety and welfare of its members and hold offenders accountable; and

WHEREAS: the Federal government and the State of Alaska have not allocated resources equitably to Alaska Native tribes, especially those in rural, remote, off-road communities, including, but not limited to, funding under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, the Violence Against Women Act, and the Victims of Crime Act. In fact, federal and state laws, policies, and practices have limited tribal government's authority to protect and ensure the health and well being of our citizens; and

WHEREAS: the State of Alaska has not complied with Sec. 2265 of the Violence Against Women Act addressing full faith and credit of protection orders, thus failing to protect victims with tribal orders; and

WHEREAS: the State of Alaska has not complied with the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 amendments requiring the State to consult and coordinate with all 229 Alaska Native tribes in the development of the State's STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Implementation Plan; and

WHEREAS: the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 contained a Special Rule for the State of Alaska in Section 910, which thereby applied sections 904 and 905 of VAWA only to the Metlakatla Indian Community, Annette Island Reserve; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 2014 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that:

- 1) The United States recognize and immediately respond to the human crisis confronting Alaska Native women due to the laws and policies that have left Alaska Native women vulnerable to perpetrators of rape, domestic violence, murder, sex trafficking, and hate crimes by:
 - Providing Alaska Native women the same protections under the Violence Against Women Act as other women in the United States specifically:
 - Assisting in the repeal of the Special Rule on Alaska contained in section 910 of VAWA 2013;
 - Require the State of Alaska Court system, Alaska State Troopers, and local police departments to recognize Alaska tribal court protection orders under the VAWA Full Faith and Credit, 18 USC 2265, and enter Alaska Native village protection orders into the National Protection Order Registry;
 - Require the State of Alaska to comply with VAWA 2013 to consult with Alaska Native Villages in the development of the State implementation plan required for the state to receive formula grant funds from OVW and coordinate with tribes in the implementation of the State plan; and

- Open an Alaska Office on Violence Against Women to provide the same access for the 229 Alaska Native Villages as Indian tribes within the lower forty-eight states to ensure equitable access of critical resources to Alaska tribes, and ensure meaningful access to Alaska Natives who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and challenged by consistent Internet access.
- Providing Alaska Native women the same protections under the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act as other victims of domestic violence in the United States specifically:
 - Provide separate annual, non-competitive formula funding specifically to Alaska Native tribes for life-saving services for advocacy, shelter and victim services calculated based on the village tribal enrollment;
 - Release a solicitation for a regional domestic violence resource center developed in partnership with the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center to Increase the Safety of Native Women, as provided under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act of 2010; and
 - Provide resources for the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center to work in partnership with the AFN to organize a Unity Meeting to Increase the Safety of Alaska Native Women annually and prior to the AFN Annual Convention beginning with the 2015 Convention.
- 2) The Alaska Federation of Natives will work with the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center to host an annual Unity Meeting to Increase the Safety of Alaska Native Women and prior to the Annual Convention beginning in 2015.
- 3) The Alaska Federation of Natives will work with the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center to establish a Task Force dedicated to addressing the emerging issues preventing the safety of Alaska Native Women.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

SUBMITTED BY: TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE
 BOARD ACTION: DO PASS
 CONVENTION ACTION: ADOPT AS AMENDED

