



2016 Winter Convention Suquamish, Washington

RESOLUTION #16 - 03

“SUPPORT THE CREATION OF THE WASHINGTON TRIBAL AND STATE COURT CONSORTIUM”

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 to 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 the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Governments, seeking to address the safety needs of their communities, develop stable economies and provide for basic needs of community members, recognize that the perception and integrity of tribal courts is vital in the protection and preservation of tribal sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, Tribal justice systems are best situated, and most capable of addressing the needs of our tribal communities and public safety and will be dramatically improved when Native nations have greater freedom to build and maintain their own justice systems; and

WHEREAS, state and federal court systems have historically not been responsive to the needs of tribal communities and may work counter to the goals and culture of tribal people; and

WHEREAS, in its report to Congress and the President, the Tribal Law and Order Commission recommended stronger coordination among Federal, State and tribal justice systems to make Native nations safer and close the public safety gap with similarly situated communities; and

WHEREAS, Tribal-state court forums that recognize tribal justice systems as full and equal partners with state courts furthers the goal of maintaining a government-to-government relationship between the tribes, the state and federal governments; and

WHEREAS, collaboration between tribal and state court judges is a key strategy to leveraging limited resources, building relationships and bridging jurisdictional gaps to improve safety and justice in Indian Country; and

WHEREAS, Tribal-state court forums lead to increased communication and relationship building across jurisdictions, thereby decreasing jurisdictional misunderstandings and increasing collaboration, as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Justice has repeatedly identified tribal state court forums as an effective promising strategy for improving tribal-state court relations; and

WHEREAS, Tribal-state court forums work collaboratively on issues such as state court implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), recognition of tribal court orders by state courts, judicial allocation of jurisdiction, coordinated probation, and adoption of uniform court forms; and

WHEREAS, Tribal-state court forums provide unique and important educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, development of the Washington Tribal and State Court Consortium has been endorsed by the Washington State Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Tribal Court Judges Association supports the ongoing development of, and participation in, the Washington Tribal and State Court Consortium; and

WHEREAS, state-wide and regional meetings of the Washington Tribal and State consortium have been well attended by representatives from both state and tribal justice systems and participants have pledged on-going support; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Washington Tribal and State Consortium is to operate in the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation, and to take the lead in resolving civil and criminal jurisdictional issues between tribal and state Courts; and

WHEREAS, the key values of the Washington Tribal and State Consortium include equal representation, cooperation, sharing, improving access to justice, and working cooperatively to find mutually acceptable solutions to shared challenges and responsibilities; now

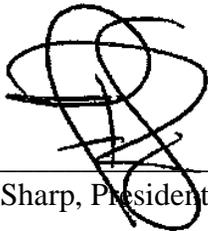
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI strongly supports the ongoing development of the Washington Tribal and State Court Consortium; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI encourages tribal governments to support the efforts of the Washington Tribal and State Court Consortium; and

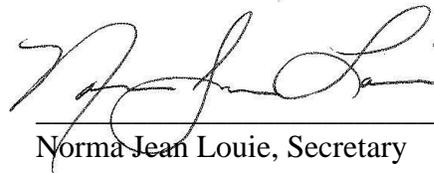
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI encourages the participation of tribal court judges and tribal justice systems in the implementation and operation of the Washington Tribal and State Court Consortium.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2016 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort, Suquamish, Washington on February 1- 4, 2016, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary