



# NICOA

## National Indian Council On Aging

Advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders

### NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGING

#### Resolution # 2014- 10

#### **TITLE: NICOA Elders Support the Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act**

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. (NICOA) 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, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the issues and needs of American Indian and Alaska Native Elders, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety, and welfare of our Elders, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, NICOA was established in 1976 by Tribal Leaders to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services, and economic wellbeing for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders. NICOA submits to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) this resolution passed by its members at their biennial meeting on September 5, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the Older Americans Act is the key legislative framework for developing, coordinating, and delivering home and community based services that allow American Indian/Alaska Native Elders to maintain their independence. The Title VI program of the Older Americans Act provides for supportive and nutrition services which aid AI/ANs across the country. The Act also authorizes the only federal workforce program which provides training to help transition low income Elders into suitable employment in their community. The Act also provides for a long term care ombudsman program to provide those living in long term care facilities with protection of their rights and wellbeing; and

**WHEREAS**, despite these and many other important provisions, the Older Americans Act was last reauthorized in 2006; its authorization expired in 2011. This delay means that even more Elders will not receive services as demand is only projected to increase. The population of American Indian/Alaska Natives age 65 and older is expected to grow by 116% by 2030. Additionally the Older Americans Act is subject to sequestration, resulting in unnecessary and harmful cuts each year through 2021; and

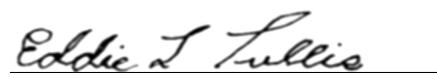
**WHEREAS**, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee voted to send S. 1562, a bipartisan reauthorization bill, to the Senate floor. In the House Rep. Suzanne Bonamici has introduced H.R. 4122, which would strengthen the Older Americans Act and is similar to the Senate bill. Another House bill, H.R. 3850 would simply reauthorize the Act with no changes; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NICOA Elders do hereby support the passage of S.1562 and H.R. 4122. These bills would expand and modernize the Act for the next 5 years as well as preserve the separate titles for congregate and home-delivered nutrition programs and maintain voluntary contributions for participants. As a last resort, NICOA would also support the straight reauthorization bill, H.R. 3850; and

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

#### **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above resolution was passed before a duly called meeting of the National Indian Council on Aging membership on 5, September 2014, in Phoenix, AZ, at which a quorum was present.

  
Chairman