



## GREAT LAKES INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL, INC.

P.O. Box 9, Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin 54538

Phone: 715-588-3324 Fax: 715-588-7900

Email: [glite@glite.org](mailto:glite@glite.org)

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Richard Hill, *Vice President*

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### **Resolution No. 2010-11.06**

### **Supporting the Rights of Native Americans to Participate in the Small Business Administration 8(a) Program**

***Whereas***, the Federal Government has a unique legal and political relationship with Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations, which is recognized in the U.S. Constitution, statutes, and Supreme Court decisions; and

***Whereas***, Congress has a legitimate interest in promoting the economic and political self-sufficiency of Native Americans as a way to fulfill the Government's unique obligations towards Native Americans; and

***Whereas***, providing access to federal contracting opportunities to qualified Native companies provides critical incentives that stimulate economic growth in Native communities, provides economic opportunities for Native American businesses, provides educational scholarships, and encourages entrepreneurs; and

***Whereas***, Congress has held many hearing that seek to address and redress the overwhelming poverty and unemployment experienced by Native Americans both on and off the reservations that arises from their historical relationship with the Federal Government; and

***Whereas***, Native communities suffer from the worst poverty in this country, with unemployment levels up to 75% and, because of the lack of resources, there are few individual entrepreneurs in Native communities; and

***Whereas***, the Federal Government buys over \$500 billion in goods and services annually, and has a statutory goal of awarding at least 23 percent (23%) of its purchases to small and disadvantaged businesses; and

***Whereas***, in hundreds of treaties with Indian tribes across the country, and through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the U.S. government committed to provide for the economic betterment of Native Americans and Alaska Natives, the majority of whom have been stripped of countless millions of acres of their Native lands; and



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*Whereas*, one of the most successful federal initiatives has been to include Native Americans (Indian tribes, Alaska Native Corporations and Native Hawaiian Organizations) in the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program; and

*Whereas*, Native American enterprises have struggled to break into the highly concentrated federal contracting marketplace, which is dominated by a handful of large companies, and only recently have some Native American enterprises become successful participants in the 8(a) program; and

*Whereas*, Native American-owned enterprises receive just over one percent (1%) of all federal contract awards compared to the five largest contractors who received twenty percent (20%) of all the contract dollars awarded in 2007; and

*Whereas*, Native American-owned enterprises provide quality performance at cost efficient rates to federal customers, while they return significant benefits back to Native American communities, rendering the Native 8(a) program a rare example of a federal economic program that works; and

*Whereas*, there have been ongoing efforts by some members of Congress to repeal or significantly modify the Native 8(a) program based on biased information, and without consideration of the Federal Government's unique obligations to Native Americans; and

*Whereas*, Native Americans have only recently become successful participants in the 8(a) program and Native communities are just beginning to experience the benefits of the program; and

*Whereas*, the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. is an intertribal consortium whose membership is comprised of twelve federally recognized Indian tribal governments located in the States of Wisconsin and Michigan; and

*Whereas*, The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council recognizes that the participation of Native Americans in the SBA 8(a) program has been an important tool in building a strong Native economy and continues to provide substantial benefits to tribal people and Native Hawaiians; and

*Whereas*, The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council recognizes past contributions of Members of Congress and the Administration to work positively with Native Americans to improve the 8(a) program for all participants and protect the rights of Native Americans in the program.

*Now, therefore, be it resolved* that the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council respectfully requests the continued support of Congress to maintain Native American-owned enterprises in the 8(a) program for the benefit of all Native communities located in the United States; and

***Be it further resolved*** that the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council does hereby strongly encourage the Small Business Administration to seek ways to promote and expand participation in the 8(a) program for Native American owned enterprises; and

***Be it further resolved*** that the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council does hereby urge the Administration to continue to consult with Native Americans on any changes to the 8(a) program that may affect Native American businesses and communities pursuant to Executive Order 13,175; and

***Be it further resolved*** that the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council strongly opposes any Congressional amendments, regulatory changes, or other means to diminish, alter, denounce, or abolish the current provisions established in the federal procurement system allowing Native Americans to create economic development for the benefit of their respective Native communities.

### CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc., do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was proposed and adopted at a duly noticed and convened meeting of the Board of Directors, held on the 4th day of November, 2010, at Madison, Wisconsin, and that the resolution has been entered upon the minutes of the Board of Directors without addition or amendment.

  
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*Louis Taylor, Secretary*