

## RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM FALL 2016 MEETING

## RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE AND OPPOSING THE DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE

Whereas, the nation's 35 accredited tribally and federally chartered colleges and universities, along with two developing (non-accredited) tribally chartered colleges (Tribal Colleges and Universities) collectively are the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC);

Whereas, the presidents of the 35 accredited Tribal Colleges and Universities compose AIHEC's board of directors, which was incorporated as a non-profit organization in the State of Colorado in 1973;

Whereas, together, the 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities operate more than 75 campuses in the 16 states within whose geographic boundaries the majority of American Indian reservations and federal Indian trust land lie:

Whereas, Tribal Colleges and Universities prepare, train, and educate more than 160,000 American Indians and Alaska Natives in academic and community-based programs each year, and collectively these individuals represent well more than 250 federally recognized Indian tribal nations;

Whereas, Tribal Colleges and Universities and AIHEC fulfill a fundamental role in maintaining, preserving and revitalizing irreplaceable American Indian and Alaska Native languages, lands, and cultures and provide accredited postsecondary education and career/technical education, as well as a wide variety of community-based economic and workforce development programs, community-based support programs, and collaborative partnerships with tribes, K-12 systems and schools, federal agencies; and operate important sustainability, land and natural resource management programs and services, and traditional foods revitalization/food sovereignty programs, all on extremely limited budgets;

Whereas, the Tribal Colleges and Universities, together will all of Indian Country, are aware that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has given approval for the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a 1,168-mile-long crude oil pipeline running from North Dakota to Illinois, which crosses hundreds if not thousands of rivers, streams, and wetlands along its route, as well as lands of great historic, religious, and cultural significance to American Indian Tribes.

Whereas, since time immemorial, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's ancestors lived on the landscape to be crossed by the DAPL;

Whereas, most specifically, the path of the pipeline comes within fifty feet of today's boundary of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation near Cannonball, North Dakota and would pass under the Missouri River and Lake Oahe, approximately half a mile upstream of the reservation;

Whereas, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe is facing serious threats to its water and life source, as well as potential damage to sacred sites, ancestral lands, and the economic and social wellbeing of tribal members as a result of construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline; and

Whereas, a pipeline spill would be culturally and economically catastrophic to the Tribe; and

Whereas, the Dakota Access Pipeline violates Article 2 of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty which guarantees that the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe shall enjoy the "undisturbed use and occupation" of Standing Rock's permanent homeland, the Standing Rock Indian Reservation;

Whereas, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, with tribes and Indigenous peoples from around the world, are standing united and peaceful in opposition to the pipeline;

Whereas, many students, faculty, and staff from Tribal Colleges and AIHEC have joined the protest at Standing Rock, including students from Haskell Indian Nations University, Red Lake Nation College, Oglala Lakota College, Leech Lake Tribal College, Little Priest Tribal College, Sitting Bull College and more;

**Now therefore be it resolved,** that the American Indian Higher Education Consortium stands in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in opposing construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline; and

**Be it further resolved,** that the American Indian Higher Education Consortium calls on federal regulators and the Army Corps of Engineers to reverse the approval of the pipeline and to justly collaborate with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe as it exercises its sovereign right to protect its resources, Treaty rights, waterways, traditional homelands, and sacred sites.

Executed and certified that the foregoing is a binding Resolution of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, approved on the Seventh Day of October, 2016, in New Orleans, LA, by the undersigned, being the Secretary of the Corporation.

Robertmartin	October 7, 2016	
Robert Martin, Secretary  American Indian Higher Education Consortium	Date	