



RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TRIBAL COURTS

WHEREAS, the tribal courts serve the children and families of sovereign nations with their respective authority and with equal responsibility as the state courts serve their constituencies; and

WHEREAS, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (hereinafter referred to as the "National Council") acknowledges that the tribal courts have historically not been regarded as equal in status with the state courts and that, as a result, the tribal courts and the children and families served by the tribal courts have been denied many of the resources available to the state courts; and

WHEREAS, the National Council, in serving children and families, recognizes that tribal and state courts are equal and parallel justice systems; and

WHEREAS, the National Council acknowledges the critical work of the tribal judges and the tribal judicial leadership organizations that support the important work of tribal judges to develop and implement effective practices, and to strive to provide the supports for tribal courts to effectively serve Native children and families; and

WHEREAS, the National Council is committed to partnering with tribal courts and judges as allies consistent with the commitment of all courts to meet the needs of all children and families served by the state courts and tribal courts without discrimination or favor; and

WHEREAS, the voice of tribal court judges is a necessary component in NCJFCJ's ability to fulfill its mission; and

WHEREAS, the National Council recognizes that children and families are best served within the contexts of their community and honors the relationship that tribal courts have within their tribes.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the NCJFCJ Board of Trustees is, and shall be, committed to engaging the tribal courts as full partners in fulfilling the mission of the National Council and in meeting the needs of all children and families served by the state and tribal courts, complying with the letter and the spirit of all laws effecting Native children and families including, but not limited to, the Indian Child Welfare Act, the Adoption and Safe Families Act in a context that supports tribal culture, the Tribal Law and Order Act, and the full faith and credit provisions of the Constitution and of federal laws of the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Council shall work with the tribal courts, tribal governing bodies, and other tribal authorities to ensure equal treatment of, and resources for, all Native families and children at all levels of government.

Adopted by the NCJFCJ Board of Trustees, January 21, 2011, St. Petersburg, FL.