



CENTRAL COUNCIL  
*Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*  
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CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA  
Seventy-Seventh Annual Tribal Assembly  
April 18-21, 2012  
Juneau, Alaska

Resolution TA/ 12-58

Title: **Opposition to Any Language Excluding Alaska Native Tribes from the Violence Against Women Act**

By: Tribal Judiciary Committee

WHEREAS, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 28,000 tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Native women are the lifeblood of our People, and their health and safety is essential to the survival of the 230 Federally Recognized Tribes in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Native women are 2 ½ times more likely to experience violence in their lifetimes than other women in the United States: more than 1 in 3 Native women will be raped in their lifetimes. Although Alaska Natives comprise only 15.2% of the State's population, they comprise 47% of the victims of domestic violence, and 61% of the victims of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska Supreme Court in the John v. Baker decision, acknowledges that many Alaska Native villages are located far from courtrooms and law enforcement creating unique barriers of culture, geography and language that make the State judicial system foreign and inaccessible to many Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS, it is well established that Alaska Native women and children are hesitant to participate in the State of Alaska reporting and judicial system because of cultural differences; the Alaska Legal Services Corporation reports that many Native clients express a strong preference for their own tribal courts which remove cultural and physical barriers to safety. Alaska Tribal Courts are critical partners in the protection of Alaska Native women and children; and

WHEREAS, the Violence Against Women Act as presently written allows Alaska Native Tribal Courts to issue civil domestic violence protection orders to provide culturally appropriate intervention in family crises, it also allows significant cooperation between Tribes and the State of Alaska State Troopers and Judicial System; and

WHEREAS, the current versions of the re-authorization of the Violence Against Women Act (HR 4154 and S.1925) discriminates by singling out Alaska Native Tribes by name, excluding them from the "Save Native Women Act", and extinguishing the pre-existing authority of Alaska Native Tribes to issue civil protective orders; and

WHEREAS, the exclusion of Alaska Tribes from the Violence Against Women Act shocks the conscience; that nearly half the Federally Recognized Tribes in the United States would be excluded from the ability to protect its people from the plague of domestic violence and takes the unprecedented step of extinguishing the well-recognized and inherent authority to adjudicate domestic relations;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seventy-Seventh Tribal Assembly of Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, convened in Juneau, Alaska on April 18-21, 2012, hereby directs the President and the Executive Council to consider this an emergency situation and to inform the Alaska Congressional Delegation that the Central Council opposes any language that discriminates against Alaska Native Families, the exclusion of Alaska Tribes must be removed from these bills;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Central Council directs the President and the Executive Counsel to work with our Congressional Delegation, and Native advocacy organizations like the National Congress of American Indians, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood, as well as other Federally Recognized Tribes to preserve the ability of Alaska Native women and children to seek the civil protections of their Tribal Courts on par with all Native Americans in the United States;

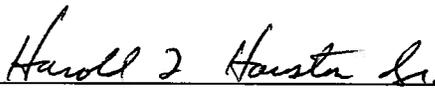
ADOPTED this 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2012, by the Seventy-Seventh Tribal Assembly of Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

**CERTIFY**



President Edward K. Thomas

**ATTEST**



Tribal Secretary Harold Houston