



## **Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council**

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Resolution #03-10-2006-06

### **RESOLUTION ON APPARENT DISPARATE TREATMENT OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE FEDERAL AND STATE COURT SYSTEMS AND TO DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION FOR REMEDY**

**WHEREAS**, the Montana/Wyoming Tribal Leader's Council has been formed to advocate on behalf of Native American interests common to all Tribes in Montana and Wyoming, and

**WHEREAS**, the Tribal Leaders have discussed, on numerous occasions, the apparent disparate treatment of Native Americans in the Federal and State court systems in both Montana and Wyoming, and

**WHEREAS**, these discussions include the observation that nearly one-third of the population of prisoners and parolees in the Montana State Prison system are Native American, even though the Native American population in Montana constitutes ten (10) percent or less of the overall population in Montana, and

**WHEREAS**, studies have indicated an unusual number of prison sentences as dispositions for Native American defendants in the Montana and Wyoming court systems, and

**WHEREAS**, in recent memory, treatment of Native Americans in the Federal system appears to demonstrate a trend towards harsher charging and sentencing of Native American individuals in the Federal system, focusing on incarceration rather than treatment of problems, and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans, because of the high poverty levels in Montana and Wyoming, seldom have the ability to hire legal counsel, and must rely upon the fairness of the systems to provide equal justice, and

**WHEREAS**, it appears that the systems of justice in both the State and Federal systems have failed Native Americans, pushing them towards severe prison sentences, rather than rehabilitation,

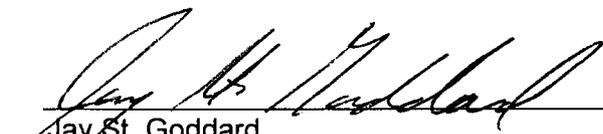
STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE  
MARCH 13, 2006 MEETING  
**EXHIBIT 7**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Montana/Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council does hereby formally request Montana's Congressional Delegation to initiate studies and investigations on the apparent disparate treatment of Native Americans in the Federal and State court systems in Montana and Wyoming, and therefrom, to develop a plan of action to address disparate treatment and the implementation of treatment alternatives to prison, in cooperation with Tribal Leaders of Montana and Wyoming, and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Officers of the Montana/Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council are hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to implement and effect this action.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

We, the undersigned, as the Chair and the Secretary of the Tribal Leaders Council, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly presented and approved, at a special Board Meeting of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, which was held on 10 March 2006 in Billings, MT.

  
Jay St. Goddard  
Chair, MTWY Tribal Leaders Council

  
Kermit Horn  
Secretary, MTWY Tribal Leaders Council