



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Office of the President • Edward K. Thomas Building
9097 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT & HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC 21-51

Title: Statement Regarding Tribal Status and Federal Laws

WHEREAS, the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a federally recognized tribe with more than 32,000 citizens; and

WHEREAS, under Article X of the Tlingit & Haida Constitution, the Executive Council is the governing body of Tlingit & Haida when the Tribal Assembly is not in session; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Assembly is not in session; and

WHEREAS, our Southeast Traditional Tribal Values teach us to speak with care and to treat each other with respect, for our language matters and has impacts; and

WHEREAS, it is with that intent, to be respectful and careful, that Tlingit & Haida speaks to its status as a tribe and the status of Alaska Native corporations, under federal law; and

WHEREAS, in Alaska, federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native corporations each hold important roles in service to Alaska Native people; and

WHEREAS, a federally recognized tribe is inherently sovereign, has a government-to-government relationship with the federal government, and governs and provides services to its citizens; and

WHEREAS, an Alaska Native corporation has generally been the recipient of funds and title to lands as compensation for the aboriginal land rights that were extinguished by Congress in 1971, with the enactment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Native corporations have a fiduciary responsibility to be managing the funds and lands in its care for the benefit of its shareholders; and

WHEREAS, the original shareholders of Alaska Native corporations were all Alaska Native, and today the majority of shareholders are still; and

WHEREAS, the same as it would undermine the true nature of an Alaska Native corporation to refer to it only as a “corporation”, for such language divests it of the responsibility to care of Alaska Native lands and resources and ignores the contributions of Alaska Native corporations to the protection of Alaska Native cultures and languages, it undermines the sovereignty of a tribal governments to refer to it as an “organization” or a “non-profit”; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Natives, shareholders, citizens and citizen shareholders, will always benefit from the collaboration and partnership of their federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native corporations; and

WHEREAS, as recognized and affirmed in the Being Good Relatives workshops, supported by the First Alaskans Institute, the tribes and Alaska Native corporations in Southeast Alaska have a genuine commitment to their relationship for the benefit our people and the ripple effects that will come from treating each other as the family that we are; and

WHEREAS, as seen in Tlingit and Haida cultures and known to others, misspeaking or speaking unthoughtfully can lead to unintended consequences which could also ripple out across the waters; and

WHEREAS, when Congress speaks about Alaska Native people and crafts legislation regarding them, it must take care to include both federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native corporations, when appropriate, but must always do so with precision in language, to avoid unintentional consequences;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska hereby requests the Alaska congressional delegation insist that when Congress makes Alaska Native corporations eligible for programs and funding, that such authorization is done by making Alaska Native corporations independently eligible and not by defining the term "tribe" to include Alaska Native corporations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Tlingit & Haida requests the Alaska congressional delegation undertake a technical corrections bill which would correct past instances where federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native corporations were mis-defined together.

ADOPTED this 28th day of September 2021, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 0 absences.

CERTIFY



President Richard J. Peterson

ATTEST



Tribal Secretary Ralph Wolfe