
**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
AMERICAN INDIANS**

RESOLUTION #

Title: Tribal Participation in the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact &
Great Lakes Basin Water Resources

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, all rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest and largest national Indian organization, established in 1944 and comprised of representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and local Tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of NCAI; and

WHEREAS, in Section 1962d-20(b)2 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended in 2000, the U.S. Congress declared as its "purpose and policy... to encourage the Great Lakes States, in consultation with the Provinces of Ontario and Québec, to develop and implement a mechanism that provides a common conservation standard embodying the principles of water conservation and resource improvement for making decisions concerning the Withdrawal and use of water from the Great Lakes Basin;" and

WHEREAS, a significant amount of the Great Lakes boundaries are on or near Tribal lands, tribal governments are equal stakeholders in protecting the Basin's surface and groundwater, with an interest which is founded in both cultural and economic traditions of ancestral sustenance hunting and fishing; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes governors and premiers have drafted the Annex 2001 compact as their common conservation standard without consultation with Tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the Annex 2001 compact, as drafted, exempts bottled water from diversion restrictions, so fails to protect the Great Lakes Basin's groundwater; and

WHEREAS, while some affected Tribes have received notification of compact negotiations, however, the most affected Tribes have not received significant consultation; and

WHEREAS, Tribes were not included during the development process, or offered any meaningful involvement in the compact negotiation process for the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact; the resulting compact fails to reflect Tribal interests in the groundwater; and

WHEREAS, eight states are involved in the compact negotiations including the States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Wisconsin and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, the eight states listed above have overcome immense obstacles and differences in order to make significant progress in the drafting the compact; and

WHEREAS, the importance of a compact for the survival and long-term well being of the Great Lakes is recognized by all tribes;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians hereby rejects the compact, as drafted, and proposes postponement of its authorization until negotiations are resumed with at least one seat at the negotiating table designated to be held by a representative of the collective Federally recognized Indian Tribes residing within the boundaries of the Great Lakes Basin States listed and that such a seat shall hold equal status, responsibility and power as the seats held by each of the States and Provinces; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians calls upon the States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Wisconsin and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through their Governors and political leaders to rescind the compact, as drafted, until remedy of the unequal treatment of Indian tribes by actively supporting the creation of a seat for said Tribes on the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact committee is effected.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the _____ Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the _____, in Spokane, Washington, with a quorum present.

President

ATTEST:

Recording Secretary