



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 21-59

Title: Support for the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act
and Bolstering Initiatives

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, assimilation and “civilization” processes against Native Americans, such as the Indian boarding school policies and practices, were adopted by the United States to strip American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children of their indigenous identities, beliefs, and languages, to assimilate them into non-Native culture through federally funded and often controlled Christian-run schools, which had the intent and, in many cases, the effect, of termination, with dire and intentional consequences on the cultures and languages of indigenous peoples; and

WHEREAS, more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Native children were forcibly removed from their family homes and placed in any of 460 Bureau of Indian Affairs operated schools, including at least 367 known Indian boarding schools, often church-run, at which assimilation and “civilization” practices were inflicted on those children as part of the federal government’s goal of advancing eradication of indigenous peoples in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the United States Indian boarding school policy’s deliberate intent was to separate Native American children from their families, cultures, communities, and tribal nations through removal and reeducation; and

WHEREAS, a boarding school was located here in Southeast Alaska where many Tlingit and Haida children were sent, and this boarding school and others were places where children were experimented on and abused, medically, physically, psychologically, and sexually; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 *Broken Promises Report* published by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights reported that American Indian and Alaska Native peoples continue to experience intergenerational trauma resulting from experiences in Indian boarding schools, which divided families, undermined cultural and societal structures, damaged indigenous identities, and inflicted chronic psychological damage to American Indian and Alaska Native children and families; and

WHEREAS, Indian boarding school policies have had lasting negative impacts on the United States and Tlingit & Haida, and have caused many of our students learning difficulties and limited many of our families' social cohesion and advancement; and

WHEREAS, Congress intends to introduce legislation titled: To establish the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices in the United States, and for other purposes, the Act may be cited as the "Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices Act"; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of this Act are to establish a Truth and Healing Commission (Commission) on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices in the United States to formally investigate and document, for the first time in history, the attempted termination of cultures and languages of indigenous peoples, assimilation practices, and human rights violations that occurred against American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians through Indian boarding school policies in furtherance of the motto to "kill the Indian in him and save the man"; and to formally investigate and document the impacts and ongoing effects of historical and intergenerational trauma in Native communities, including the effects of the attempted cultural and linguistic termination of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, resulting from Indian boarding school policies, among other things; and

WHEREAS, the Commission's main role is to develop recommendations on actions the federal government can take to adequately hold itself accountable for, and redress and heal, the historical and intergenerational trauma inflicted by the Indian boarding school policies and practices;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska hereby supports congressional efforts to pass legislation approving the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices Act and bolstering initiatives, and subsequent recommendations, to hold the federal government accountable for, and redress and heal, the historical and intergenerational trauma inflicted by the Indian boarding school policies and practices.

ADOPTED this 21st day of October 2021, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 5 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 1 absence.

CERTIFY



President Richard J. Peterson

ATTEST



Tribal Secretary Ralph Wolfe