

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 277

Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Policy of Indian Self-Determination

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 23, 2000

Mr. CAMPBELL (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. INOUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Policy of Indian Self-Determination

Whereas the United States of America and the sovereign Indian Tribes contained within its boundaries have had a long and mutually beneficial relationship since the beginning of the Republic;

Whereas the United States has recognized this special legal and political relationship and its trust responsibility to the Indian Tribes as reflected in the Federal Constitution, treaties, numerous court decisions, federal statutes, executive orders, and course of dealing;

Whereas Federal policy toward the Indian Tribes has vacillated through history and often failed to uphold the gov-

ernment-to-government relationship that has endured for more than 200 years;

Whereas these Federal policies included the wholesale removal of Indian tribes and their members from their aboriginal homelands, attempts to assimilate Indian people into the general culture, as well as the termination of the legal and political relationship between the United States and the Indian Tribes;

Whereas President Richard M. Nixon, in his “Special Message to Congress on Indian Affairs” on July 8, 1970, recognized that the Indian Tribes constitute a distinct and valuable segment of the American federalist system, whose members have made significant contributions to the United States and to American culture;

Whereas President Nixon determined that Indian Tribes, as local governments, are best able to discern the needs of their people and are best situated to determine the direction of their political and economic futures;

Whereas in his “Special Message” President Nixon recognized that the policies of legal and political termination on the one hand, and paternalism and excessive dependence on the other, devastated the political, economic, and social aspects of life in Indian America, and had to be radically altered;

Whereas in his “Special Message” President Nixon set forth the foundation for a new, more enlightened Federal Indian policy grounded in economic self-reliance and political self-determination; and

Whereas this Indian self-determination policy has endured as the most successful policy of the United States in dealing with the Indian Tribes because it rejects the failed poli-

cies of termination and paternalism and declared that “the integrity and right to continued existence of all Indian Tribal and Alaska native governments, recognizing that cultural pluralism is a source of national strength”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the United States recognizes the unique role of the Indian Tribes and their members in the United States, and commemorates the vision and leadership of President Nixon, and every succeeding President, in fostering the policy of Indian Self-Determination.

○