

100TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 331

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 5 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 26), 1988

Received and referred to the Select Committee on Indian Affairs

OCTOBER 21 (legislative day, OCTOBER 18), 1988

Committee discharged

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To acknowledge the contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the development of the United States Constitution and to reaffirm the continuing government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States established in the Constitution.

Whereas the original framers of the Constitution, including, most notably, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, are known to have greatly admired the concepts of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy;

Whereas the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was influenced by the political system developed by the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself; and

Whereas, since the formation of the United States, the Congress has recognized the sovereign status of Indian tribes and has, through the exercise of powers reserved to the Federal Government in the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (art. I, s.2, cl. 3), dealt with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis and has, through the treaty clause (art. II, s.2, cl. 2) entered into three hundred and seventy treaties with Indian tribal Nations;

Whereas, from the first treaty entered into with an Indian Nation, the treaty with the Delaware Indians of September 17, 1778, the Congress has assumed a trust responsibility and obligation to Indian tribes and their members;

Whereas this trust responsibility calls for Congress to “exercise the utmost good faith in dealings with Indians” as provided for in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, (1 Stat. 50);

Whereas the judicial system of the United States has consistently recognized and reaffirmed this special relationship: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the Congress, on the occasion of the two hun-
4 dredth anniversary of the signing of the United States
5 Constitution, acknowledges the contribution made by
6 the Iroquois Confederacy and other Indian Nations to
7 the formation and development of the United States;

8 (2) the Congress also hereby reaffirms the consti-
9 tutionally recognized government-to-government rela-
10 tionship with Indian tribes which has been the corner-
11 stone of this Nation’s official Indian policy;

1 (3) the Congress specifically acknowledges and re-
2 affirms the trust responsibility and obligation of the
3 United States Government to Indian tribes, including
4 Alaska Natives, for their preservation, protection, and
5 enhancement, including the provision of health, educa-
6 tion, social, and economic assistance programs as nec-
7 essary, and including the duty to assist tribes in their
8 performance of governmental responsibility to provide
9 for the social and economic well-being of their mem-
0 bers and to preserve tribal cultural identity and herit-
1 age; and

2 (4) the Congress also acknowledges the need to
3 exercise the utmost good faith in upholding its treaties
4 with the various tribes, as the tribes understood them
5 to be, and the duty of a great Nation to uphold its
6 legal and moral obligations for the benefit of all of its
7 citizens so that they and their posterity may also con-
8 tinue to enjoy the rights they have enshrined in the
9 United States Constitution for time immemorial.

Passed the House of Representative October 4, 1988.

Attest: DONNALD K. ANDERSON,
Clerk.