



AIEBC

American Indian Enterprise & Business Council

### Resolution Supporting Legal Action Regarding the Opioid Crisis

WHEREAS, The American Indian community, the Indigenous peoples of America is in the midst of an opioid crisis that is taking an enormous toll on the people and families of The American Indian peoples, as well as impacting Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, and Health and Human Services with significant increased demand for services; and

WHEREAS, over **seventeen million** opioid prescription pills were dispensed in 2016 to the American Indian population on and off reservations resulting in increased numbers of overdoses; and

WHEREAS, over seventy percent of children entering foster care enter as a result of substance use by a parent or parents; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal impact to the American Indian community related to health care costs, jail administration and incarceration, emergency management services, child welfare, and public assistance will likely exceed \$19 Million dollars in federal, state, and county funding; and

WHEREAS, Substance misuse is directly implicated in the disproportionately high morbidity and mortality rates found among American Indian teens. American Indian youth (ages 15 to 24 years) have an all-cause mortality rate 2.1 times higher than that of the general population (196.5 vs. 95.3 per 100,000 population) and 2.3 times higher than that of Whites, the group with the lowest rate (196.5 vs. 84.3 per 100,000 population; Indian Health Service, Office of Public Health, Program Statistics Team, 1999).

WHEREAS, treatment options for people with substance use disorders are limited, particularly for the under and uninsured; and

WHEREAS, Environmental contexts (including community, family, and peer variables) have great impact on the development of substance use and misuse among American Indian and Alaska Native adolescents

WHEREAS, several units of local government and organizations across the nation have filed lawsuits against prescription pain manufacturers in an effort to hold the same accountable for their role in the opioid epidemic; and

WHEREAS, use among American Indian youth can be attributed to poverty and extremely poor social conditions that have exposed them to significantly more risk factors, which may directly or indirectly lead to more alcohol and drug use (Beauvais & LaBoueff, 1985).

WHEREAS, The American Indian Enterprise & Business Council (AIEBC) strongly believes that the American Indian community and reservations may be entitled to recovery against painkiller manufacturers and wishes to pursue recovery in the most efficient way possible. It further believes that an attorney, attorney Speers is in the best position to efficiently procure such a result; however, the AIEBC is willing to proceed on its own if any action or inaction by attorney Speers does not appropriately address its concerns.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board for the American Indian Enterprise & Business Council as follows:

1. That it supports attorney Speers involvement in the bipartisan coalition of the majority of attorneys across the country investigating whether prescription painkiller manufacturers have engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing and sale of opioids.
2. That it recommends legal action be taken and compensation be sought by attorney Speers on behalf of the American Indian people if it is found that painkiller manufacturers have engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing and selling of opioids.
3. That, notwithstanding its recommendation above, the AIEBC intends to investigate the feasibility of taking legal action itself against prescription painkiller manufacturers.
4. That the AIEBC is to monitor the ongoing investigation and evaluate its effect on the American Indian community, to investigate the feasibility of joining any lawsuits or potential lawsuits, to publish a Request for Information seeking an attorney(s) and/or law firm(s) competent to handle any litigation the American Indian community might pursue and to report the findings to the AIEBC.
5. That this resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

This the \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

ATTEST BOARD OF THE AIEBC \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Chief Billie Friend, Eric Rowcroft, Irene Bedard, Doug Spangler John JH OBrien Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM \_\_\_\_\_

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