

FY'02 RESOLUTION #15

Requesting the Joint Department of the Interior and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Trust Reform to recognize an ITMA representative as a standing member of the Task Force and designating Majel Russell, Esq. as the ITMA representative on the Task Force.

WHEREAS, the Intertribal Monitoring Association on Indian Trust Funds (ITMA) is a representative organization of fifty-three (53) federally recognized Indian tribes, including the nation's largest tribal trust fund account holders;

WHEREAS, for the past 12 years, ITMA has been the premier Indian organization that was formed and dedicated for the sole purpose of monitoring the Federal Government's trust asset and management activities as they relate to Indian trust funds;

WHEREAS, without consulting the Indian tribes, the Secretary of the Interior announced on November 15, 2001 a proposal to restructure the Indian trust activities of the BIA and other Interior Department agencies by placing them in a newly created Interior agency called the Bureau of Indian Trust Asset Management headed by its own Assistant Secretary ("BITAM" proposal);

WHEREAS, without consulting the Indian tribes, on November 20, 2001 the Secretary of the Interior requested that \$300 million of funds appropriated in FY 2002 for Indian trust functions be reprogrammed for the purpose of funding the BITAM proposal;

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Interior did not, and presumably, could not identify the programs, functions, responsibilities or resources that would fall under the new BITAM Assistant Secretary nor did she provide adequate information regarding the trust duties to be fulfilled or the objectives to be achieved by the BITAM proposal;

WHEREAS, ITMA vigorously opposed the BITAM proposal based on its longstanding position that any meaningful trust reform undertaking must first begin with an analysis of the duties that are required to be performed in the management of Indian assets, followed by the Department of the Interior's acknowledgement and disclosure of the past trust failures, including known instances of mismanagement, loss, trespass, and theft;

WHEREAS, in an oversight hearing on Indian trust reform before the United States House of Representatives Resources Committee, ITMA testified in opposition to the Secretary of the Interior's \$300 million reprogramming request;

WHEREAS, following the Indian tribes, tribal organizations and individual Indians' UNANIMOUS opposition to the BITAM proposal, the Secretary of the Interior agreed to participate in discussions and work with a Tribal Leaders Task Force on Trust Reform, the composition of which includes three representatives selected by the tribes from the respective 12 BIA Regions;

WHEREAS, the Tribal Leaders Task Force evolved into a Joint Department of the Interior and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Trust Reform for the asserted purpose of ensuring maximum and meaningful participation of the Department of the Interior;

WHEREAS, ITMA, the lead organization on Indian trust reform, has not been allowed position on the Task Force even though ITMA has been the lead organization on Indian trust fund reform for more than a decade and represents the largest Indian trust fund account holders who have the most at stake in the overall trust fund reform deliberations:

WHEREAS, during a general membership meeting held on April 6, 2002 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the ITMA membership and ITMA Board of Directors unanimously voted that ITMA should send a letter to the Task Force requesting that an ITMA representative be given some standing as a regular representative with authority to speak and vote;

WHEREAS, pursuant to unanimous vote of the ITMA membership and Board of Directors present at the April 6, 2002 Albuquerque, New Mexico meeting, Majel Russell, tribal member and attorney for the Crow Tribe, a member ITMA tribe, was appointed to serve as ITMA's representative on the Task Force.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE INTERTRIBAL MONITORING ASSOCIATION ON INDIAN TRUST FUNDS, that in recognition of its long service and expertise in the area of Indian trust fund management and reform issues, ITMA requests that the Task Force revise its protocols to ensure that ITMA's representative Majel Russell be added as a member of the Task Force with authority to speak and vote.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing ITMA FY'02 Resolution #15 was duly adopted at an official meeting of the Board of Directors of the Intertribal Monitoring Association on Indian Trust Funds held in Albuquerque, New Mexico on April 6, 2002, at which time a quorum was present with 8 voting for; 0 voting against, and 0 abstaining.

A T T E S T:

Chief Charles Tillman, Chairman

Governor Harry Early, Secretary