



“A Tradition of Native American Housing”

**NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HOUSING COUNCIL
RESOLUTION #2009-05**

**SUPPORT FOR THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIVE
FINANCIAL EDUCATION COALITION**

WHEREAS, the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) is comprised of 273 voting members representing the housing interests of American Indian tribes, Alaska Natives, and native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, the stated purpose of the organization is to promote advocacy for policy and legislative changes that will favorably impact our primary goals of providing culturally relevant and quality affordable housing for Native people in a manner recognizing the unique government-to-government relationship of tribes and the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the NAIHC is a member of the Native Financial Education Coalition (NFEC), which is a group of local, regional, and national organizations and government agencies dedicated to promoting financial education in Native communities; and

WHEREAS, the NFEC has compiled a list of recommendations to federal policy makers in areas where intervention is needed to promote and support financial education as the foundation for other asset building initiatives in Native communities; and

WHEREAS, Native American communities need stronger federal anti-predatory lending and consumer protection legislation that protects all borrowers while allowing both tribal and state jurisdictions to regulate specific practices that threaten the financial and general well-being of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Native American communities need legislation enacted to provide specific consumer protections against the commercial practice of encouraging and issuing high-cost Refund Anticipation Loans, which strip Native people of much-needed refunds; and

WHEREAS, Native Community Development Financial Institutions are a driving force with proven success in Native communities and these institutions need to be expanded further to stimulate Native economic development and create an environment in which individuals have access to asset building opportunities such as savings, investments, and homeownership, entrepreneurship, and small business development; and

WHEREAS, the Assets for Independence Act which provides funding for Individual Development Account (IDA) match savings programs has not been reauthorized since 2002 and needs to be amended to accommodate the unique circumstances of Native IDA programs; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National American Indian Housing Council supports the following policy recommendations from the Native Financial Education Coalition:

- **Extend the Military Lending Act** to cap Annual Percentage Rates at 36% for all consumers, covering a wider variety of credit products, which will protect Native American communities from predatory lending practices; and
- **Enact legislation that restricts Refund Anticipation Loan** marketing and lending at tax time and provides specific consumer protections against the commercial practice of encouraging and issuing high-cost Refund Anticipation Loans which strip Native peoples of much-needed refunds and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) benefits; and
- **Increase funding to at least \$10 million or 10 percent of the CDFI Fund's appropriation,** whichever is greater, for Native economic development initiatives at the U.S. Department of the Treasury's CDFI Fund; and
- **Increase appropriations for the newly created Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) grant program** administered by the Internal Revenue Service and expand eligible uses of grant funds to include related financial education and asset building activities; and
- **Reauthorize and amend the Assets for Independence Act** to
 - allow tribal governments to apply directly for IDA funding,
 - make income eligibility requirements mirror NAHASDA eligibility requirements,
 - allow the use of tribal program support funds such as Indian Community Development Block Grant and Indian Housing Block Grant as non-federal match,
 - lower the non-federal match rate,
 - increase the percentage of funds that can be used for supportive services, such as financial education and operations; and
- **Support appropriation of \$5 million under Section 4 the Housing and Urban Development Demonstration Act of 1993,** specifically designated for rural and

Native communities and waive non-federal match requirements, which provides seed capital for nonprofit community development organizations to expand their capacity to provide financial education services.

CERTIFICATION

As the duly appointed Secretary for the National American Indian Housing Council, I hereby certify that Resolution #2009-05, was adopted at NAIHC's 35th Annual Business Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana on May 14, 2009, with a quorum present.



Marty Shuravloff, Chairman



Jason Adams, Secretary