HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3017

Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota

Introduced by

Representatives Kempenich, Steiner

A concurrent resolution urging Congress to modify the Indian reservation system by vesting the states with the ability to engage in relations with Native American tribes and with the responsibility of developing plans to improve the failed Indian reservation system, advance and elevate the quality of life on Indian reservations, promote and increase literacy on Indian reservations, and help Indian reservations to achieve economic stability and independence.

WHEREAS, Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution vests Congress with the authority to engage in relations with Native American tribes, thereby firmly placing tribes within the constitutional fabric of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the term "Indian reservation" refers to the ancestral territory given over to a Native American nation and there are approximately 565 federally recognized tribes and 326 Indian reservations in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the 1851 Indian Appropriations Act, which created the reservation system, forced Native Americans to move to and live on reservations; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Indian reservation system, for the most part, was to remove land from the Native Americans and segregate Native Americans from American settlers; and

WHEREAS, in 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act to restore to Native Americans management of their assets, to build a sound economic foundation for the people of the reservations, and to return to the Native Americans local self-government on a tribal basis; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 launched a new era of Indian self-determination and generally aimed at facilitating tribal sovereignty or self-rule; and

WHEREAS, under the management of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian reservations continue to be among the poorest communities in the United States; and
WHEREAS, Native American communities suffer from high rates of poverty, unemployment, youth suicide, and many Native Americans receive inadequate health care and live in overcrowded and poor-quality homes; and
WHEREAS, the current Indian reservation system has become flawed and obsolete;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:
That the Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly urges Congress to modify the Indian reservation system by vesting the states with the ability to engage in relations with Native American tribes and with the responsibility of developing plans to improve the failed Indian reservation system, advance and elevate the quality of life on Indian reservations, promote and increase literacy on Indian reservations, and help Indian reservations to achieve economic stability and independence; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution to the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, and to each member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation.