



RESOLUTION # 2015-5

TITLE: Requesting Federal Civil Rights Investigation Into Death of Christina Dawn Tahhahwah in City of Lawton, Oklahoma Jail

WHEREAS, the National Native American Bar Association (“NNABA”) was founded in 1973 and serves as the national association for Native American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students, and strives to be a leader on social, cultural, political and legal issues affecting American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NNABA works to promote issues important to the Native American community and to improve professional opportunities for Native American lawyers, we do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, American Indigenous peoples have the highest incarceration rate of any racial or ethnic group in the United States, at 38 percent the national rate; and

WHEREAS, American Indigenous peoples incarcerated in prisons and jails in the United States have suffered and continue to suffer civil rights violations resulting from abuse and neglect by federal, state and local corrections officials; and

WHEREAS, on or about November 13, 2014, Mrs. Christina Dawn Tahhahwah, a member of the Comanche Nation, a federally recognized Indian tribe, passed away while imprisoned in a municipal jail in Lawton, Oklahoma, under questionable circumstances; and

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2015, 2015, the Comanche passed Resolution No. 10-2015, authorized a request that “the United States Department of Justice investigate the wrongful death of Mrs. Christina Dawn Tahhahwah in all respects, issue complete reports and take appropriate civil and criminal enforcement actions.”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Native American Bar Association hereby requests that the United States Department of Justice, particularly its Civil Rights Division, investigate circumstances surrounding the passing of Mrs. Christina Dawn Tahhahwah while she was in custody in a City of Lawton, Oklahoma jail.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution shall be immediately transmitted by the National Native American Bar Association President, to the U.S. Attorney General and the heads of the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and Office of Tribal Justice.



CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the membership at the Annual Meeting of the National Native American Bar Association, on Wednesday, April 8, 2015, with a quorum present.

Mary Smith

Mary Smith, President