



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2016 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 16-15

- TITLE:** THAT THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE PERMANENTLY REINSTATE THE MONTH OF MARCH AS "SOBRIETY AWARENESS MONTH (SAM)" IN SUPPORT OF ITS DECLARATION OF POLICY UNDER ALASKA STATUTE 47.37.010
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 151 federally recognized tribes, 150 village corporations, 12 regional corporations and 12 regional non-profit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** the mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The declaration of policy for the State of Alaska, under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, is "to recognize, appreciate, and reinforce the example set by its citizens who lead, believe in, and support a life of sobriety"; and
- WHEREAS:** Between the years of 1995 and 2006, the Alaska Legislature designated the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) ten times in recognition and support of Alaska Statute 47.31.010; and
- WHEREAS:** Many Alaskans lead, believe-in and support a life of sobriety, universally agreeing that it is a positive, healthy, and productive way of life, free from the devastating effects of alcohol and drugs; and
- WHEREAS:** These same Alaskans comprise a population for which a voluntary census has never previously been taken before to confirm the population exists. The lifestyle choice they have chosen is proof that they are "Living Examples To The Truth", that life can be lived and enjoyed without having to consume any mood/mind altering substance or beverage; and
- WHEREAS:** Between 1993 & 1995, AFN supported the growing grass-roots sobriety movement in Alaska, and collected more than 10,000 sobriety pledge signatures from men, women and children who claimed the goals of sobriety. These signatures were given to Iditarod Musher for Sobriety Mike Williams, of Akiak, Alaska, who carried these signatures 1,049 miles in the March 1995 Iditarod Sled Dog Race as a symbolic gesture to honor the "serum of commitment" that was needed to help cure alcohol and drug abuse throughout Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** In 1996, AFN learned that no Alaska statute referenced sobriety in accordance with this pledge of sobriety so the Alaska House of Representatives' Judiciary Chair, Representative Brian Porter introduced legislation under HB523A (1996)

to amend Alaska Statute 47.37.010 with language that recognized, appreciated and reinforced the lifestyle many people voluntarily ascribed; and

WHEREAS: In comparison to the pervasive social-ills caused by alcohol and drug abuse in Alaska, there exists an aggregate population of citizens who lead a life of sobriety, whose lifestyle choice has three societal benefits which include, but are not limited to:

1. An improved quality of life and health for individuals, families and communities;
2. An improved reduction in crime and social ills (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual assault, homicide, suicide, etc.) predominately associated with alcohol and drug abuse; and
3. An improved reduction in government spending for local, state and federal treasuries that end up paying for the pervasive social ills caused by and associated with alcohol and drug abuse.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 2016 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that AFN call upon the Alaska State Legislature to permanently reinstate and annually designate, in perpetuity, the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month in accordance with fulfilling, in whole or in part, its declaration policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature enact or amend all state grant services and any state grants federal matching requirements for all substance abuse prevention programs, to set aside up to five percent of their annual program budget to help the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under AS 47.37.010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Alaska's Governor, his or her Cabinet, and any for-profit or non-profit agency(ies) interested in helping the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, develop meaningful and respectful methods to collect census data to prove the existence of Alaska's aggregate citizen population by inviting citizens who are willing to voluntarily self-identify as being among many of the Living Examples To The Truth that life can be lived and enjoyed without having to consume any mood or mind altering substances; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that from the collected census data be used as a baseline established for Alaska's Living Examples To The Truth population, which can be monitored and documented on a voluntarily basis throughout every Alaska community in order to showcase and appreciate all the positive social outcomes or health correlations that are a direct result of this population's chosen lifestyle, and whose documented and monitored healthy baseline findings can be relevantly added to the Healthy Alaskans 2020 Scorecard (<http://hss.state.ak.us/ha2020/>); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that every public and private organization affected by, concerned with, and working toward the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse, be encouraged to pass an identical resolution and publicly invite all Alaska citizens to wear a white ribbon of their choosing during the month of March 2017, Sobriety Awareness Month, as a way to recognize, appreciate, and reinforce those who are truly making a difference by their freely chosen lifestyle of sobriety, which benefits society.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

SUBMITTED BY:	COOK INLET REGION, INC.
COMMITTEE ACTION:	PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:	AMEND AND PASS



Julie Kitka

President