



ROBINSON RANCHERIA

CITIZENS BUSINESS COUNCIL

September 30, 2020

National Congress of American Indians
Embassy of Tribal Nations
1516 P Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

To whom it may concern:

Robinson Rancheria Citizens Business Council (RRCBC) supports the efforts of National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) to establish a Tribal Citizenship Policy and Protection Task Force to study, educate, and advocate regarding issues of Indigenous kinship and tribal citizenship.

As a member of the National Congress of American Indians, RRCBC is invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations. Indigenous societies and nations in the United States possess and have always possessed the inherent right to decide who belongs to an Indigenous society or nation.

Additionally, Article 9 of the United Nations Declaration On The Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes and affirms that “Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right”. Indigenous kinship and tribal citizenship have been impacted by colonial and federal treaties and laws since the eighteenth century, including the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which defined “Indian” to “include all persons of Indian descent who are members of any recognized Indian tribe now under Federal jurisdiction, and all persons who are descendants of such members who were, on June 1, 1934, residing within the present boundaries of any Indian reservation, and . . . all other persons of one-half or more Indian blood”.

The federal Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, 25 U.S.C. 1302(a)(8), provides that: “No Indian tribe in exercising powers of self-government shall . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of its laws or deprive any person of liberty or property without due process of law.

A growing body of Indigenous scholarship warns that arbitrary and incongruent definitions of tribal citizenship threaten the future of Indigenous citizenries and nations, including Norbert Hill’s *The Great Vanishing Act: Blood Quantum and the Future of Native Nations*; Dr. Kim TallBear’s *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*; and Dr. David Wilkins’ *Dismembered*.



RRCBC supports NCAI's purview to offer education, guidance, and advocacy needed by Indigenous nations as they wield their sovereign powers in order to establish and maintain harmonious kinship relations and protect the human and civil rights of their citizens. National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) affirms that Indigenous nations enjoy the inherent right to decide who belongs to an Indigenous nation and individuals enjoy the right to belong to an Indigenous nation free from discrimination or due process deprivation.

RRCBC thanks NCAI for its continued work for helping our nations become stronger.
Thank you.

Respectfully,



Eddie Crandell Sr.,
RRCBC Chairperson