



**2020 Winter Convention  
Portland, Oregon**

**RESOLUTION #2020 - 14**

**“CALLING ON THE WASHINGTON STATE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE TO  
REFORM WATER RIGHTS FOR NEW INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USERS”**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of the ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, 90.44 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) describes the State of Washington’s process for the management of public groundwater; and

**WHEREAS**, Washington State provides for a permitting process for industrial or commercial purposes exceeding a specific use or quantity; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Washington does not charge a market-rate fee to obtain public groundwater; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Washington Senate passed SB 6091 in January 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 6091 requires a \$500 fee on wells and, in some places will limit withdrawals to an annual average of 950 gallons a day, as well as private well meters in some communities; and

**WHEREAS**, although SB 6091 represents a step forward for Washington water conservation, it does not address significant water withdrawals by industrial and commercial interests; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 6091 established RCW 90.44, "Streamflow Restoration," which establishes methods for restoring streamflow in watersheds where water scarcity is a concern; and

**WHEREAS**, water 'buy-backs' have been occurring at a rate which establishes that there is a market and a value for public water resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Washington does not establish a value or charge private commercial or industrial water developers a market rate for their withdrawals; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI does hereby call upon the Washington State Governor and the Washington State Legislature to reform water rights for new industrial and commercial water users; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI calls upon the Washington State Governor and the Washington State Legislature to value public water resources appropriately to market rates; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that ATNI requests the Washington State Governor and the Washington State Legislature to cease the practice of giving away public resources to private companies while charging private citizens for water use.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2020 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the DoubleTree by Hilton - Portland, Oregon, on January 27-30, 2020, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary