

WHEREAS, the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association (GPTCA) is composed of the 16 elected Chairs and Presidents or their duly appointed representatives of the sovereign Indian Tribes and Nations recognized by Treaties entered into with the United States that are within the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association was formed to promote the common interests of the sovereign Indian Tribes of the Great Plains Region and their members in the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, the United States has recognized the sovereign status of Tribal Nations through the U.S. Constitution, treaties and by numerous federal statutes; and

WHEREAS, there is well documented evidence that federal conservation policy has left Indian Country behind in it's efforts until the last 3 decades, and

WHEREAS, this exclusion means that any natural disaster has a greater effect in Indian Country because federally subsidized mitigation practices such as water development, cross fencing, and pasture rotation are not as widespread; and

WHEREAS, until the policies put in effect since the 2002 Farm Bill such as increased cost shares, and Socially Disadvantaged Set-asides, are allowed to continue and put Indian Country on equal footing with the rest of U.S. farmers and ranchers there will remain the need for programs to deal with the unique circumstances faced by Indian Producers and Tribes to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, such as the fires and droughts experience; and

WHEREAS the House of Representatives has proposed H.R. 6233 as an alternative to the consideration of a full Farm Bill to cope with the devastating effects of the nationwide drought; and

WHEREAS this bill contemplates cutting over \$600 million *from the very conservation programs* designed to mitigate affects of future disasters to pay for disaster assistance; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association that H.R. 6233 be amended to remove the offsets in the Conservation Title from the funding mechanism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a further amendment reauthorizing the American Indian Livestock Feed Program be included in H.R. 6233, and that any assistance received therefrom does not preclude participation in the continuously authorized disaster assistance programs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association urges both Houses of the Congress to work together to put forward meaningful Agriculture Policy for the entire nation in the form of a Farm Bill, and include in said policy more of the recommendations of this body as well as those of the Intertribal Agriculture Council which are attached hereto, as if fully incorporated.