



INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

06262020_02

University of Minnesota Repatriation

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council Membership consists of representatives of the eleven federally-recognized Indian Tribes located within the State of Minnesota, members of the legislature, commissioners from state agencies, and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) is a liaison between the state and local units of government in the delivery of services to the American Indians in the State of Minnesota, and

WHEREAS, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a federal law that requires the University of Minnesota to repatriate and return any American Indian human remains and funerary objects in its custody to the home tribal communities of the deceased, and

WHEREAS, several of the Native Nations of Minnesota played a direct role in advocating for passage of NAGPRA, including submitting testimony to congressional committees to achieve its passage into law in 1990, and

WHEREAS, despite NAGPRA having the force of law since 1990, the University of Minnesota has failed to comply with the Act for thirty years and has continued to treat deceased American Indian people as university property, which is a modern-day perpetuation of historic policies of genocide and colonization that degraded American Indian people as human beings, and

WHEREAS, despite NAGPRA having the force of law since 1990, the University of Minnesota has failed to comply with the Act for thirty years by continuing to treat sacred funerary objects stolen from the burial sites of our deceased relatives from other tribes as University property for use and display at the University of Minnesota's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, and

WHEREAS, MIAC under Private Cemeteries Act (MS 307.08) became the temporary caretaker of the human remains of our deceased relatives, and

WHEREAS, after thirty years of MIAC demanding repatriation and action from the University of Minnesota's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, MIAC's custody of our deceased relatives from other tribes no longer seems temporary as the University of Minnesota's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum has made little to any significant movement or progress in reuniting these people with their sacred funerary objects which would lead to their return to their home reservations, and



WHEREAS, the Native Nations of MIAC view MIAC's continued temporary custody of the human remains of our relatives as enabling the University's continued resistance and failure to comply with NAGPRA.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that MIAC demands that the University of Minnesota take immediate steps to repatriate our deceased American Indian relatives to their home reservations and return all funerary objects to the Native Nations from which they came, including hiring Native American experts to guide this process, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University of Minnesota hire Native American experts to guide the repatriation process which must include an inventory of human remains, sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony and funerary objects at all University of Minnesota campuses and facilities, and

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY RESOLVED, that the University of Minnesota shall provide a quarterly report at all future MIAC meetings of all activities and progress related to repatriating our deceased relatives and funerary objects including consultation with the Native American experts guiding the process.

CERTIFICATION: We do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly presented and acted upon by a vote of 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Silent at Regular Meeting of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, a quorum present, held on February 18, 2020 in St. Paul, Minnesota.


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Robert L. Larsen, Chairman
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council

Shelley Buck, Vice Chairwoman
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council