

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3017

Introduced by

Representatives Kempenich, Steiner

1 A concurrent resolution urging Congress to modify the Indian reservation system by vesting the
2 states with the ability to engage in relations with Native American tribes and with the
3 responsibility of developing plans to improve the failed Indian reservation system, advance and
4 elevate the quality of life on Indian reservations, promote and increase literacy on Indian
5 reservations, and help Indian reservations to achieve economic stability and independence.

6 **WHEREAS**, Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution vests Congress with the
7 authority to engage in relations with Native American tribes, thereby firmly placing tribes within
8 the constitutional fabric of the United States; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the term "Indian reservation" refers to the ancestral territory given over to a
10 Native American nation and there are approximately 565 federally recognized tribes and 326
11 Indian reservations in the United States; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the 1851 Indian Appropriations Act, which created the reservation system,
13 forced Native Americans to move to and live on reservations; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the purpose of the Indian reservation system, for the most part, was to remove
15 land from the Native Americans and segregate Native Americans from American settlers; and

16 **WHEREAS**, in 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act to restore to Native
17 Americans management of their assets, to build a sound economic foundation for the people of
18 the reservations, and to return to the Native Americans local self-government on a tribal basis;
19 and

20 **WHEREAS**, the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 launched a new era of Indian self-
21 determination and generally aimed at facilitating tribal sovereignty or self-rule; and

22 **WHEREAS**, under the management of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian
23 reservations continue to be among the poorest communities in the United States; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Native American communities suffer from high rates of poverty, unemployment,
2 youth suicide, and many Native Americans receive inadequate health care and live in
3 overcrowded and poor-quality homes; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the current Indian reservation system has become flawed and obsolete;

5 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF**
6 **NORTH DAKOTA, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:**

7 That the Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly urges Congress to modify the Indian reservation
8 system by vesting the states with the ability to engage in relations with Native American tribes
9 and with the responsibility of developing plans to improve the failed Indian reservation system,
10 advance and elevate the quality of life on Indian reservations, promote and increase literacy on
11 Indian reservations, and help Indian reservations to achieve economic stability and
12 independence; and

13 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution
14 to the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, and to each member of the
15 North Dakota Congressional Delegation.