AFN Special Chiefs Assembly
December 9-11, 2008 Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 62/2008

SUBJECT:	HEALTH SERVICES FOR FIRST NATIONS IRONWORKERS WHO VOLUNTEERED AT THE 9/11 RESCUE
MOVED BY:	Regional Chief Bill Erasmus, Proxy, Liidlii Kue First Nation, NWT
SECONDED BY:	Chief Abram Benedict, Proxy, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, QC
DECISION:	Carried by consensus

WHEREAS:

A. A number of First Nations ironworkers responded to the request for help in the rescue effort in New York on 9/11, at least thirty but probably two to three times that number;

B. First Nations ironworkers suffered exposure to the contaminants in the air during the rescue;

C. The United States have provided special health services and supports to their emergency response workers, and the First Nations ironworkers have been included but are at risk of losing this health service;

D. Currently the health impacts have been severe, and none of these victims have been able to reengage in their profession due to their illnesses arising from lung and gastrointestinal damage sustained from inhaling chemicals in the air in the days following the attack;

E. Given that most of the workers were in their early 30s and that the long term effects of these health risks are unknown, it is imperative that they continue to have access to high quality care for their current and potential future illnesses; and

F. First Nations ironworkers have three unique barriers to receiving health services:
   a. the injury occurred outside of Canada, so the Non-Insured Health Benefits program may not cover them;
   b. the injury occurred while employed, but because it wasn't in Canada, Workmen's Compensation will not cover their health benefits; and
   c. the injury was work related so Provincial Health services will not cover their treatment.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 10h day of December, 2008 in Ottawa, ON

PHIL FONTAINE, NATIONAL CHIEF

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Assembly of First Nations to formally honour the ironworkers and other First Nations who volunteered at Ground Zero.

2. Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Assembly of First Nations to support the ironworkers and other First Nations volunteers to find immediate and long-term health services.

3. Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Assembly of First Nations to advocate for the federal and provincial governments to provide health services and programs to the First Nations volunteers of the 9/11 rescue.

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