

COMMITTEE REPORT

Drug and Prevention Committee

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians -
2024 Midyear Convention

Canyonville, OR

DISCUSSION

Opening

Co-Chair of the Committee, Margo Hill, couldn't make to ATNI so Councilman Nick Lewis (Lummi) and Councilwoman Monica Tonasket (Spokane) co-chaired the meeting.

The committee opened with introductions and a welcome from the co-chairs.

WA State Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Summit

Councilwoman Tonasket invited everyone to the 2nd Washington State Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Summit being held July 23 to July 25 at the Davenport Grand Hotel in Spokane, WA. The Summit is being hosted by the Spokane Tribe. She talked about the impact of fentanyl on tribal communities in Washington. Tribes are not only experiencing overdoses and losses, but there has also been an increase in crime and jurisdiction issues, which the Summit will cover.

Some of the topics that were addressed at the 1st Summit will be addressed at the 2nd Summit. Several breakouts will take place to update the 2024 Tribal opioid priorities. These include: 1) prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery; 2) housing and homelessness; 3) justice; 4) family and community services; and 5) first responders. The first responder track is new at this Summit. Youth were invited and will be active in the Summit. One of the purposes of the Summit is to map out the work for the next two years and to identify needed resources.

Washington Tribes had the opportunity to address Governor Inslee at the 1st Summit. Washington Tribes asked Governor Inslee to declare a state of emergency related to the fentanyl crisis and he declined the request. At the 2nd Summit, Washington Tribes will have another opportunity to address Governor Inslee and make the same request.

Councilwoman Tonasket also mentioned that seven opioid bills are being worked on in Washington.

How the Opioid/Fentanyl Epidemic is Impacting our Tribal Communities

Committee members discussed:

- issues with local law enforcement working with tribes;
- the lack of holding facilities;
- the continued threat of tranquilizers;
- new threat of car fentanyl;

- the balance between locking up a person for fentanyl use or allowing them to use safely through harm reduction practices;
- harm reduction can create other issues, i.e., used needles can be found in public spaces where kids may be present;
- and other issues.

Solutions were discussed, including:

- working with DEA as to school events to educate kids;
- the availability of resources to educate kids and community members;
- holding community workshops to address this crisis; and
- the need to focus on prevention and youth. As for youth, it is important to create safe and fun opportunities for them to gather. For example, getting tickets donated for a sports event.

Councilman Lewis talked about the National Tribal Opioid Summit recommendations and the work in Washington State. He has also been advocating with local jurisdictions – city councils, mayors, counties - on making emergency declarations or resolutions to address the fentanyl crisis. Building relationships with local jurisdictions is part of the solution.

The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board shared information on the ECHO clinics that tribes or tribal providers can access for free at indiancountryecho.org. The Health Board also has a webpage dedicated to resources related to the National Tribal Opioid Summit, and have various other fentanyl/opioid resources available to Tribes in Idaho, Oregon and Washington that can be ordered or downloaded.

ADOPTED AND RECOMMENDED TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution # & Title:

COMMITTEE - TABLED

Resolution # & Title:

Minutes/Report submitted by: Nickolaus Lewis
Drug & Prevention Member