Minute in Support of a Truth & Healing Commission for Native Peoples

(Originally brought forward by Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee of the Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting Approved August 8, 2021)

South Central Yearly Meeting supports the "Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act" - S.2907 — 117th Congress (2021-2022), that was introduced to the U.S. Senate on September 30, 2021 by Senator Elizabeth Warren, at the request of U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Debra Haaland.

The purpose of the bill is to set up a Truth and Healing Commission to address the historical trauma experienced by Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian children who were forcibly removed from their homes between 1869 and the 1960's and placed in Indian Boarding schools. The children were taught to reject their Native languages, cultures, and spiritual practices and adopt Euro-American culture. Native Americans continue to suffer multigenerational trauma caused by this policy of forced assimilation and cultural genocide.

Quakers were among the strongest supporters of the Indian boarding school policy and operated some 30 Indian schools (some in collaboration with the federal government) for varying periods of time.

Further, the commission must develop recommendations on ways to (1) protect unmarked graves and accompanying land protections; (2) support repatriation and identify the tribal nations from which children were taken; and (3) discontinue the removal of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children from their families and tribal communities by state social service departments, foster care agencies, and adoption agencies.

SCYM urges Friends to watch for this bill and give it their support. SCYM further urges Friends to learn the history of the Quaker Indian schools and consider ways to support indigenous-managed healing processes, including programs to teach indigenous languages.

Approved 16 April 2022, SCYM Annual Sessions, Bruceville TX
Contact peace@scym.org with questions and comments