

Towns of
Colchester *Cornwall* *Ledyard*
North Stonington *Preston* *Roxbury*
Connecticut

August 2, 2013

Elizabeth Appel
Acting Director
Office of Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 4141-MIB
Washington, D.C. 20240

**Re: Docket ID: BIA-2013-0007, RIN 1076-AF18
Request for Extension of Comment Period**

Dear Ms. Appel:

The Towns of Colchester, Cornwall, Ledyard, North Stonington, Preston and Roxbury, Connecticut (the "Towns") hereby request an extension of the comment period on the "preliminary discussion draft" of proposed revisions to the tribal acknowledgment regulations released on June 21, 2013. *See* Procedures for Establishing That an American Indian Group Exists as an Indian Tribe, 78 Fed. Reg. 38,617 (June 27, 2013) (to be codified at 25 C.F.R. pt. 83). The proposed changes to 25 C.F.R. Part 83 would result in dramatic consequences for our Towns and the State of Connecticut. Despite the clear effect of the proposal on previously denied and potential future tribal acknowledgment decisions in Connecticut, no meeting has been scheduled anywhere close to our State and a short comment period of only 60 days has been offered.

We understand that the announced basis for the release of the preliminary draft is to consult with tribal interests under federal Indian policy. Comments from non-tribal interests are also essential, however. BIA can obtain a full record and be properly advised on the proposal only if it provides sufficient time to review this highly detailed proposal.

The current rules have been in effect for over 30 years, and we are aware of no reason to rush through a sweeping revision process such as been proposed in the preliminary discussion draft. Please provide a **45-day extension** to the current comment period so interested parties have sufficient time to review the proposal and submit responsive comments. Thank you for considering this request.



Very truly yours,

/s/ Gregg Schuster

Gregg Schuster
First Selectman
Colchester

/s/ Gordon M. Ridgeway

Gordon M. Ridgeway
First Selectman
Cornwall

/s/ John Rodolico

John Rodolico
Mayor
Ledyard

/s/ Nicholas H. Mullane, II

Nicholas H. Mullane, II
First Selectman
North Stonington

/s/ Robert M. Congdon

Robert M. Congdon
First Selectman
Preston

/s/ Barbara Henry

Barbara Henry
First Selectman
Roxbury

cc: Senator Richard Blumenthal
Senator Chris Murphy
Representative John Larson
Representative Joe Courtney
Representative Rosa DeLauro
Representative James Himes
Representative Elizabeth Esty
Governor Dan Malloy
Attorney General George Jepsen
Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
Kevin Washburn, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs
Lee Fleming, Director of the Office of Federal Acknowledgment