September 20, 2013

Ms. Elizabeth K. Appel, Acting Director
Office of Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action- Indian Affairs,
1849 C Street, NW, MS 4141 – MIB,
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Revision to Criteria for Federal Recognition

Dear Ms. Appel:

As a taxpayer and a concerned citizen, I am writing in support of a proposal being presented by the Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama (CTNEAL).

I understand that revisions are being made to Title 25, Chapter 1, Part 83: Procedures for Establishing that an American Indian group exists as an Indian Tribe. This is a critical issue affecting American Indians throughout our great country.

The Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama has read and discussed these proposed changes. CTNEAL agrees there needs to be an increased transparency of regulations, and that these procedures should be written in an easier and clearer language. The citizens of CTNEAL also agree that the criteria for federal recognition should be fair and reasonable. Currently criteria are a violation of the 14th Amendment to our Constitution … due process.

Although the 1934 Act was a federal law, many states continued to have state laws on their books that were being enforced, and the federal government simply looked the other way. For decades, American Indians were treated as less than human and their right to life was in jeopardy. Many of the anti-Indian laws in the southeastern states that affected property ownership, interracial marriages, education, etc. were not repealed until the mid-1960s.

I ask that you carefully study the proposed changes from CTNEAL and that revised criteria take into consideration our regional history, especially in the South, where American Indians were treated as sub-class citizens by the Europeans and the United States Federal Government.

Sincerely,

1036 Scenic Trail
Warrior, AL 35180

c: President Barack Obama
Senator Jeff Sessions
Senator Richard C Shelby