

Towns of

Cornwall

Ledyard

North Stonington

Preston

Connecticut

July 21, 2014

The Honorable Kevin K. Washburn
Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
MS-4141-MIB
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

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

Dear Assistant Secretary Washburn:

I am writing to repeat our earlier requests for an extension of the comment period on the proposed regulations to amend 25 C.F.R. Part 83 for the tribal acknowledgment process and a public meeting in Connecticut. We submitted these requests by letters of June 25 and June 30 and thus far have not had any response. The comment period deadline is now only one week away, and numerous parties have requested an extension due to the great complexity and controversy associated with the proposed rules. Please act favorably on this request expeditiously so the Department has the benefit of an objective and complete record based upon informed public comments.

With regard to the public meeting, many parties in Connecticut are affected by the proposed rule and wish to speak. The closest location in Mashpee, Massachusetts is very inconvenient. In addition, Connecticut is uniquely affected by this proposal and should be the site for a meeting, rather than Mashpee. As a result, few if any parties from Connecticut will participate at Mashpee, not for lack of interest but as a statement to the Department that fairness and full disclosure to affected parties requires a meeting in Connecticut. Please also respond to this request promptly. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Gordon M. Ridgway
Gordon M. Ridgway
First Selectman
Cornwall

John Rodolico
John Rodolico
Mayor
Ledyard

Nicholas H. Mullane II
Nicholas H. Mullane, II
First Selectman
North Stonington

Robert M. Congdon
Robert M. Congdon
First Selectman
Preston

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
Elizabeth Appel, Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action
Lee Fleming, Director of the Office of Federal Acknowledgment