Towns of

Cornwall	*Preston*	*Ledyard*
North Stonington	*Connecticut*	*Roxbury*

June 30, 2014

Elizabeth Appel
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: RIN 1076-AF18 and RIN 1094-AA54
Request for Extension of Comment Periods

Dear Ms. Appel:

By letter of June 25, 2014, our Towns requested a 60-day extension of the comment period on the proposed rule revising the tribal acknowledgment regulations published on May 29, 2014. *See* Federal Acknowledgment of American Indian Tribes, 79 Fed. Reg. 30766 (May 29, 2014)(to be codified at 25 C.F.R. pt. 83). As explained in that letter, the complex and extensive proposed changes to 25 C.F.R. Part 83 would result in significant negative consequences for our Towns and the State of Connecticut. We also asked for a public meeting to be held in Connecticut.

On June 19, 2014, your office published an additional proposed rule regarding the hearing and re-petition procedures that would be established by the May 29 proposed rule, with a comment period that would close on August 18, 2014. 79 Fed. Reg. 35126 (June 19, 2014). The procedures covered by the June 19 proposal are complex and are an integral part of the general proposed regulations. We therefore request an extension of the comment period on the June 19 hearing and re-petition proposed rule also, so that the comment period for both proposed rules would close together on a date no sooner than October 1, 2014.

In addition, the May 29 Federal Register notice indicated that a separate public comment period ending today applies to comments on the information collection requirements of the proposed rule. 79 Fed. Reg. 30772. We see no reason why the comment period for the information collection determinations of the proposed rule should be any different from the comment period for the proposed rule itself. We believe the discussion of the information requirements in the May 29 notice is flawed and based on incorrect assumptions, and our Towns are developing comments for that purpose. Accordingly, we also request an extension of the

comment period for information collection requirements on the proposed rule so that all three comment periods would close together, no sooner than October 1, 2014.

In closing, there is no reason for three separate closing dates for comments on any aspect of the proposed tribal acknowledgment regulations. The current approach, with different and insufficient comment periods, is confusing, inefficient, difficult to comply with, and unjustified. Please confirm that a uniform comment deadline of no sooner than October 1, 2014, will apply to the two proposed rules and the information collection determinations. Thank you for considering this request.

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

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