

***Towns of***  
***Ledyard                      North Stonington                      Preston***  
***Connecticut***

February 17, 2021

Acting Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
MS-3642-MIB  
Washington, D.C. 20240

**Re:    Federal Acknowledgment Re-Petitioning Ban (25 CFR 83.4(d))**

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary:

On behalf of the Towns of Ledyard, North Stonington, and Preston, Connecticut, we are writing to request that, pursuant to your authority under 25 C.F.R. 83.31(a), you temporarily suspend the review of any documented petitions for acknowledgment that have been, or may be, submitted by previously denied petitioners. Two recent federal district court decisions vacated and remanded the ban on re-petitioning by previously denied groups at 25 C.F.R. 83.4(d), and the Department is currently undertaking tribal consultation on this matter. A temporary suspension would provide a needed time out during the remand, preserving the status quo while all options are considered. In the absence of a formal hiatus in the review of any such petitions, the mandatory timelines in the regulations would begin to run on any re-petitions, potentially resulting in considerable wasted time and resources by all parties. In addition, we request that the Department's consultation include other interested and affected parties. The Towns have participated extensively in previous acknowledgment proceedings for groups in Connecticut and submitted detailed comments in the 2015 rulemaking to revise the Part 83 regulations. The Towns would be directly affected if previously denied groups are allowed to re-petition.

Finally, we request that the consultation process not be limited to 25 C.F.R. 83.4(d). The provisions of 25 C.F.R. Part 83 are all integrally related, and they were developed as a unified package. If any one of those provisions, is to be changed, the effect on other provisions must also be taken into account for possible revision.

Thank you for considering this request.

Very truly yours,

		
Fred B. Allyn III Mayor Town of Ledyard	Robert Carlson Selectman Town of North Stonington	Sandra Allyn- Gauthier First Selectman Town of Preston

cc: Senator Richard Blumenthal  
Senator Chris Murphy  
Representative Joe Courtney  
Representative Rosa DeLauro  
Representative Jahana Hayes  
Representative James Himes  
Representative John Larson  
Governor Ned Lamont  
Attorney General William Tong