

DOI SELF-GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

c/o Self-Governance Communication and Education

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Sent electronically to consultation@bia.gov

November 29, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Indian Country Involvement in DOI Re-Organization - (Implementation of Executive Order 13781)

Dear Secretary Zinke:

On behalf of the Department of the Interior (DOI) Self-Governance Advisory Committee (SGAC), I am writing to request an update on the status of DOI's implementation of Executive Order 13781, "Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch". In addition we would like to know how you are addressing or being responsive to the recommendations provided by Indian Country during the initial Tribal consultation process conducted earlier this year. The SGAC submitted formal comments on E.O. 13871 on July 15, 2017 (copy attached).

As noted in the SGAC comments we recommended that the Department conduct additional Tribal consultation sessions once a draft DOI Strategic Plan on the Reorganization is available. We remain greatly concerned that: (1) Tribal leaders have not seen a draft Reorganization Plan; and, (2) that decisions are being made by the Department (e.g. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) reorganization of key staff and Regional Directors) which directly impact Indian Country without follow-up communication with Tribes to share your review and what an initial design of a Reorganization Plan would entail. We further recommend that it would be appropriate to have additional formal consultations with Tribes based on your review and next steps prior to implementing any changes. .

As sovereign nations, all relations between the United States and Indian Tribes should be of a formal government-to-government nature. Further, we request that DOI involve Tribal governments to assist you in filling current vacancies within the BIA to ensure that they are supportive of Tribal Self-Determination and Self-Governance principles and our ability to effectively operate our governments.

The SGAC would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to have a face-to-face meeting with Self-Governance Tribes during our Quarterly Meetings in Washington, DC. In addition we extend a standing invitation to you as a VIP Speaker for our Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference. This is an excellent forum to consider hosting future consultations on policy and budget issues that should be discussed with Tribes in advance of the Department imposing and/or finalizing major changes to existing DOI-Tribal governmental relations. We will contact your office with a formal invitation and the dates for 2018.

We look forward to continuing to work with DOI so that we can collectively advance our mutual goals during this critical process. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this letter further, please contact me at rallen@jamestowntribe.org or at (206) 369-6699. Thank you.

Sincerely,



W. Ron Allen
Tribal Chairman/CEO, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Chairman, DOI SGAC

cc: John Tahsuda III, Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Sharee Freeman, Director, Office of Self-Governance, DOI

Enclosure: *SGAC Letter to The Honorable Secretary Zinke RE: Comments on the DOI's Implementation of EO 13871 July 15, 2017*