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Washington, DC

The Rev. Dr. Jerry Drino

San Jose, CA 95127

February 27, 2025

Department of the Interior
Office of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Attn: Office of Federal Acknowledgment
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Subject: Support for the Salinan Tribe's Federal Recognition Petition

Dear Office of Federal Acknowledgment,

I am writing in support of the Salinan Tribe's petition for federal recognition by submitting a letter of endorsement to the U.S. Department of the Interior. I am writing as a member of the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real of Central Coastal California which encompasses the lands of the Salinan tribe with a deep commitment to land acknowledgment and recognition of Indigenous peoples. The Salinan people, whose ancestral lands span the central California coast, have maintained their cultural identity, traditions, and community despite generations of displacement and systemic erasure. Federal recognition is essential to ensuring the tribe's rights, sovereignty, and access to crucial resources for cultural preservation, education, and economic sustainability.

The Salinan Tribe has demonstrated its continuous existence as a distinct Indigenous community, fulfilling the necessary criteria for federal acknowledgment. However, gaining formal recognition requires a broad coalition of support from individuals, organizations, faith communities, and institutions that value justice and Indigenous rights. Your voice in this process is critical.

The Episcopal Church, through its Office of Indigenous Ministries, has long affirmed the dignity and sovereignty of Native peoples. In alignment with these commitments, I urge you to stand with the Salinan Tribe by writing to the Department of the Interior, affirming their rightful place among the federally recognized Indigenous nations of this land.

To make your support as effective as possible, please consider including the following points in your letter:

- Acknowledgment of the Salinan Tribe's enduring presence and cultural contributions.
- Recognition of their continuous efforts to preserve their language, traditions, and governance.
- The importance of federal recognition in securing resources for education, healthcare, and self-determination.
- A call for a just and timely response from the Department of the Interior.

Letters can be sent to:

Department of the Interior – Office of Federal Acknowledgment

Office of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Attn: Office of Federal Acknowledgment

1849 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20240

For more information about the Salinan Tribe's petition, please visit their official website:

<https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/ofa/406-simslo-ca>. You may also find additional resources through Truth-Telling Task Force website "A Beginning is Not A Beginning" - <https://www.taskforce.com/>

I appreciate your time and consideration in supporting the Salinan people's pursuit of justice and recognition. If you have any questions or would like assistance drafting your letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for standing in solidarity with the Salinan Tribe.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Jerry Drino

San José, CA 95127

Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real (Coastal California)

Indigenous Nations Diversity Network, San Benito County