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Washington, DC

Mattaponi Tribal Government

Elected April 26, 2022

[redacted]
West Point, VA 23181 [redacted]

April 28, 2025

Department of the Interior
Office of the Assistant Secretary- Indian Affairs
ATTN: Office of Federal Acknowledgement
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 202401

Dear Assistant Secretary,

Please accept this in regard to the registered petition #408: Mattaponi Indian Tribe and Reservation, VA. I am a proud member of the Mattaponi Indian Tribe and now one of the people who 42 other enrolled Mattaponi chose to lead them as chief and council in an historic election held March 26, 2022. The election, which has been challenged by those claiming to be the Tribe's legitimate governing body, was the first election of any kind in our tribe for more than four decades and the first election in one hundred years in which women and all Mattaponi descendants who could prove their lineage were allowed to participate. Those who participated unanimously approved a constitution guaranteeing for the first time that all Mattaponi descendants have the right to participate in tribal governance regardless of race or gender and be protected from violations of due process, free speech and equal protection by their tribal government and leaders. This elected council filed a petition for federal recognition on January 4, 2023.

Petition #408 lacks enrollment of historic tribal descendants and fails to include many important historical documents of the tribe. These documents can be viewed on the following links for your convenience:
https://www.tsenacommacah.com/post/the-mattaponi-lie-part-1
https://www.tsenacommacah.com/post/the-mattaponi-lie-part-2
https://www.tsenacommacah.com/post/the-mattaponi-lie-part-3

The Council elected in March 2022 is and has been working to unite our tribe under an inclusive governance structure that ensures lineal descendants from the historic families listed on the 1868 tribal roll are on the current roll. Our efforts to seek mediation and reconciliation have been rejected out of hand by those who filed petition #408. We will continue to work with the authority of the Commonwealth to assist in the unification of the Mattaponi tribal people under one sovereign national tribal government.

Therefore, I request that your office pause the review process until the Mattaponi tribe has resolved its' governance dispute at the state level.

Please accept this correspondence as a public comment for your consideration. Thank you in advance.

Respectfully,

[redacted]

India Harrison

www.Mattaponitribe.org