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Akiak Native Community
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Good morning to all of you, Honorable Chair Fawn Sharp and the Commission. It is a huge honor to speak to you today on the issues of trust in Alaska, I thank you so much for the opportunity. I will get down to the questions on Trust Reform and Models that were posed and will try to answer them the best I can.

First of all, I applaud the Judges decision on the Akiachak Native Community vs. Salazar which is long over due in Alaska. It is not right to deny putting lands into trust in Alaska because of the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Prohibiting to put lands into trust has caused irreparable harm to all of our Tribes, being with no land and no Indian Country to have jurisdiction to protect our lands, women, children and waters. The lands that are put are in fee simple title and lands in Alaska are vulnerable for loss in the future. That law extinguished the aboriginal title we held on to our ancestral lands and gave them to the State Chartered for profit corporations of its own making. It left our Tribes and Children landless and in utter poverty and poured out inheritance into corporations it had made. It has divided our People and we are witnesses to that, but we do not blame our relatives who manage these corporations, they are implementing what was planned for them, by the framers of ANCSA.

Getting back to the lands into trust, in Haines, Alaska, the Chilkoot Native Association has applied for 72 acres of land that they were denied the petition stating that ANCSA prohibited putting lands into trust for Alaskan Tribes.

Our President of the United States, Barack Obama made a statement at his summit with the Tribal Nations in November, 2010, which I attended, his desire to allow “all Federally Recognized Tribes to put lands into Trust which will protect it for future generations with the establishment of “Indian Country” in our traditional lands is necessary. We have been unable to put them until now. I would recommend that the Department of the Interior quickly implement in reviewing and approving the applications that the Federally Recognized Tribes had made, to protect our land holdings for future generations of our Tribes with no impacts on pending applications for the Federally Recognized Tribes. I have three recommendations for land acquisitions for land transfer into trust:

- 1) .Amend 25 Code of Federal Regulations part 151, land acquisitions, to include Alaska;
- 2) Provide Funding for boundary surveys for Tribes that acquire Lands into Trust;
- 3) Provide direct Consultations with Tribal Governments on issues related to Land Acquisitions of Trust Lands.

I am recommending that each of the 229 Federally Recognized Tribes provide ALL the needed delivery of services to Trust Beneficiaries at the Tribal level. Each Tribe knows its communities and its needs. Each Tribe must be afforded adequate funding to implement these services at the local level, many communities have implemented the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 and have greatly improved the quality of services. Capacity building for each Tribe must be on going into the future. It still is up the each Tribe to consider forming coalitions or consortium of Tribes to provide services. But to continue to honor their Sovereign Status. The three recommendations for the Commission to consider to improve would be:

1. Provide adequate technical support for each Tribe to make sure they are in compliance;

- 2) Provide adequate contract support costs for each Tribe;
- 3) To provide ongoing meaningful consultation with each of the 229 Federally Recognized Tribes

There are many other models to consider from our sister Tribes in the south 48, but in Alaska, we need to see each successful Tribe, such as Fort Yukon and Akiak Native Community who are providing great services to its members/citizens. Some of the examples to look at other Tribally managed models would be Eskimo Whaling Commission, Nanook Commission, Migratory Bird Treaty, Marine Mammal Protection, etc. Some of these models have been successfully managed that benefited the tribes in Alaska.

I have several recommendations for Alaska regarding trust relationship with Alaska Native Tribes, Trust Lands, and Hunting and Fishing Rights. My recommendations on these issues, we need Alaska Native Restoration Act by the administration and Congress to allow:

- 1) That the Federal Government honor its Trust Obligations solely with the 229 Federally Recognized Tribes of Alaska;
- 2) Transferring ownership and control of village and regional corporation lands back to the Federally Recognized Tribes and by recognizing these lands as "Indian Country" under the jurisdiction of the Tribal Governments;
- 3) Restoring the Aboriginal Hunting and Fishing Rights of Alaska Natives that Section 4(b) of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act had summarily "extinguished" and affirming the right of Alaska's Indigenous People to hunt, fish and gather in traditional and accustomed places in perpetuity, and
- 4) Mandating the enrollment of all Alaska Natives and Alaska Native Children born before, on, or after December 18, 1971 into ANCSA regional and village corporations regardless of blood quantum, eligibility to be determined by a Tribal Government.

I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to speak and recommend of our hopes and dreams to have the quality of life that our ancestors had and worked hard from time long ago.

Thank you for the consideration of my recommendations on the trust issues.

Mike Williams,