



**CAYUGA NATION**  
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THE 2011 CAYUGA NATION UNITY COUNCIL REMAINS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE NATION GOVERNMENT, DESPITE THE INTERIOR BOARD OF INDIAN APPEALS' REFUSAL TO UPHOLD THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS' RECOGNITION DECISION

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On January 16, 2014, an administrative appeals board overturned the 2011 Bureau of Indian Affairs recognition of the Cayuga Nation Unity Council, citing procedural defects. The Interior Board of Indian Appeals (IBIA) did not say that the recognition decision was wrong, refusing to address the merits. Instead, it found that the BIA was not required to make a recognition decision at that time.

The IBIA ruling did not address Cayuga law or the processes by which the Nation chooses its leaders. Although, by virtue of the ruling, the United States continues to recognize Clint Halftown as the Nation's "federal representative," Mr. Halftown was in fact removed from that position pursuant to Cayuga law in 2011 when the Unity Council was formed.

The Unity Council will continue to implement Cayuga Nation law and work to secure the recognition by outside governments, including the United States, of the Nation's authorized government. "We will continue to uphold and strengthen the traditions, language and culture of our Nation," said Chief William Jacobs, "and we will continue to work to build bridges and better working relationships with our neighbors." In addition, the Unity Council hopes to move forward in developing economic initiatives that will benefit the Central New York region as a whole. The Unity Council strongly opposes casino gambling on Nation lands and believes other economic development initiatives hold more promise for the Nation and the region.

"This administrative decision points out a problem with the BIA process followed in 2011 but has no bearing on the legitimacy of the Nation's leadership," said Joe Heath, one of the attorneys for the Unity Council. "We are investigating all the legal options to ensure the United States properly and timely recognizes the authorized government of the Cayuga Nation," he said.

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