



May 18, 2015

Office of Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action
Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW, MS 3642
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking –Regulations for State Courts and Agencies in Indian child Custody Proceedings – RIN 1076-AF25 – Federal Register (March 20, 2015)

Dear Ms. Appel,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed ICWA regulations. The new regulations make it clear that there is no exception to the application of the ICWA based on the so-called “existing Indian family doctrine.” State courts should not be in the business of deciding what an Indian family is, or whether that family is worth protecting. A person’s blood quantum, record of voting in tribal elections and his or her subscriptions to tribal newsletters say little about that person’s essential family and tribal relationships. I think it’s good that the regulations keep state courts from considering such extraneous details.

I am thankful that the State District Court did follow the ICWA guidelines and that our Comanche Nation ICW was notified. Because the law was followed; I am now Grammy to two beautiful little Comanche girls. I cried for weeks knowing that Baby Veronica was not given this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Mithlo, MSW".

Sandra Mithlo, MSW
Comanche Nation Social Services