



## IN SUPPORT OF CHEROKEE CHILDREN AND STRONGER ICWA GUIDELINES

**WHEREAS**, there is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children, and

**WHEREAS**, the family, serving as the primary source of love, identity, self-esteem and support, is the very foundation of Cherokee Nation communities, and

**WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Bureau proposed federal regulations to accompany the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) which will ensure every Indian child, their family and their tribe are treated fairly, and by the letter and spirit of the law, and

**WHEREAS**, one of ICWA's primary purposes is to keep Native children connected to their families and tribal communities. Without these new regulations ICWA will continue to be misunderstood and misapplied, and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed regulations provide greater guidance and clearer instruction to state courts when working with tribes, and require early identification of Native children, and

**WHEREAS**, the new ICWA regulations will make sure that we can protect our children's and families' rights, and ensure tribal governments have a right to protect our most important asset, our children.

**WHEREAS**, the proposed regulations will protect the best interests of Indian children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families just as Congress intended when it passed ICWA.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill John Baker, do hereby commend the Bureau of Indian Affairs for proposing new federal regulations to strengthen ICWA.



Done at the Cherokee Nation,  
this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May in  
the year of our Lord, two thousand fifteen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill John Baker".

**Bill John Baker, Principal Chief  
Cherokee Nation**

