

**CHEROKEE NATION**  
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**Todd Hembree**  
**Attorney General**

Ms. Elizabeth Appel  
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,

As lead ICWA counsel for Cherokee Nation and Counsel of Record in *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl*, I have seen firsthand the suffering that occurs when Indian children are removed from their families, communities and tribes. I have also witnessed the inconsistent treatment of Indian children, their families and their tribes across multiple jurisdictions. Thirty-seven years after the passage of ICWA, we continue to see courts, attorney and agencies attempt to circumvent ICWA. The proposed regulations are essential to ensure the letter, spirit and intent of ICWA are followed as well as to ensure consistent treatment of Indian children, their families and their tribes across the country. Personally and on behalf of Cherokee Nation, I emphatically support the proposed regulations and have included comments meant to clarify and strengthen the regulations.

In addition to Cherokee Nation's written comments, I have attached a Proclamation by Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Bill John Baker, which supports the regulations and commends the BIA for their proposal. Also included is a Resolution by the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council which unanimously supports the proposed regulations.

On May 14, 2015, dozens of Cherokee Nation officials and employees attended both the tribal consultation and public hearings in Tulsa, OK to express our unified support of the regulations and our gratitude to the BIA for the work of promulgating the regulations. We all believe that if the regulations are implemented in substantially similar form as proposed, the best interests our children and will be protected and the great Cherokee Nation will continue to thrive.

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Chrissi Ross Nimmo  
Assistant Attorney General