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NORTHERN CHEYENNE AGENCY
LAME DEER, MT 59043

April 6, 2026

Andy Werk, Superintendent
Northern Cheyenne Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Lame Deer, Montana

Jodi A. Camrud
Deputy Regional Director – Trust Services
Rocky Mountain Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs
2021 4th Avenue North
Billings, Montana 59101

Re: Tribal Court Remedies Availability Reminder and Request for Recognition

Mr. Werk & Ms. Camrud:

This correspondence responds to Mr. Werk's April 2nd inquiry via text regarding whether the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council intends to proceed in constitutional court or tribal court.

As set forth in the Council's December 3, 2025 letter to Deputy Regional Director Camrud, the Bureau's continued insistence that the Council "pursue tribal remedies" is both legally and practically unworkable. The Northern Cheyenne Constitutional Court has already determined that it lacks jurisdiction over this dispute, and no tribal forum presently exists with authority to adjudicate the issue.

Accordingly, the question is not where the Council should file, but why the Bureau continues to withhold recognition while simultaneously directing the Council to forums that cannot provide relief.

The Council further advises that it does not currently have access to tribal or personal funds necessary to retain legal counsel. This lack of resources is not incidental—it is a direct result of the Bureau's actions. The Council was the duly elected and seated governing body until the Bureau intervened and gave effect to the so-called Chiefs' Declaration, which purported to remove elected officials without any constitutional process. That intervention, including law enforcement actions, displaced the Council from its offices and deprived it of access to governmental resources necessary to function.



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Under these circumstances, it is unreasonable to expect the Council to initiate litigation while simultaneously being denied recognition, access to offices, and access to funds.

The Bureau created the present vacuum by recognizing or operationalizing an extra-constitutional declaration while refusing to issue a formal recognition decision. Having done so, the Bureau bears responsibility for correcting the situation.

At a minimum, the Bureau must:

1. Recognize the duly elected Tribal Council consistent with the Tribe's Constitution and the record before it; or
2. Issue an interim recognition decision and require those asserting authority under the Chiefs' Declaration to seek judicial validation of that claim in a proper forum.

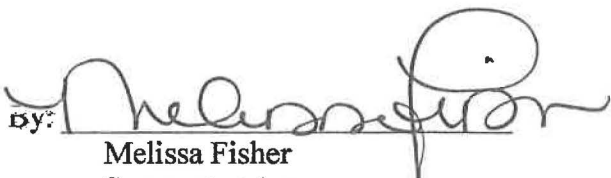
The current posture—refusing recognition while directing the lawful Council to non-existent remedies—is untenable and inconsistent with the Bureau's obligations under federal law.

The Council remains willing to engage in any lawful process that actually exists and can provide relief. However, it will not accept a framework that conditions recognition on the pursuit of remedies that the Bureau knows are unavailable.

Finally, we note that on March 2, 2026, materials were submitted to the IBIA, yet the Bureau of Indian Affairs did not inform the Tribal Council until nearly a month later that service was allegedly deficient. This delay reflects gamesmanship, not good-faith administration. Ms. Camrud could and should have notified the Council immediately if there were any issue with service. The stakes here are not abstract—Northern Cheyenne lives and governance are directly impacted and should not be subjected to such tactics. Ms. Camrud will be personally served in the very near future, and if there is any issue whatsoever with that service, we request that she notify me immediately so it may be promptly addressed.

Respectfully,

NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL

By: 

Melissa Fisher
Sergeant at Arms
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council
(406) 740-1938
Meilisfish79@gmail.com