Please see below a joint statement from:

- Principal Chief Bill John Baker, Cherokee Nation
- Chairman Robert Martin, Morongo Band of Mission Indians
- Chairman Tehassi Hill, Oneida Nation
- President Fawn Sharp, Quinault Indian Nation

Tribal Statement Commending Broad Bipartisan Support for Indian Child Welfare Act by Federal, State and Tribal Lawmakers and Leaders

(January 18, 2019) -- We applaud the broad coalition of federal lawmakers, attorneys general from 21 states, and 30 child welfare organizations who have joined 325 Tribal governments and 57 Tribal organizations in filing numerous amicus briefs with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit to defend the Constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

The past 96 hours have witnessed an unprecedented and overwhelming demonstration of support for ICWA and its constitutionality as a wave of amicus briefs were filed urging the Fifth Circuit to reverse the district court’s ruling in *Brackeen v. Zinke*, which erroneously deemed key provisions of ICWA as being unconstitutional.

Passed more than 40 years ago by Congress, ICWA was designed to reverse decades of cultural insensitivity and political bias that had resulted in one-third of all Indian children being forcibly removed by the government from their families, their tribes and their cultural heritage.

ICWA ensures the best interests and wellbeing of Native American children are protected. ICWA preserves the stability and cohesion of Tribal families, Tribal communities and Tribal cultures. It maintains and reinforces the political and cultural connections between an Indian child and his or her tribe.

Over the past several days, amicus briefs urging the Fifth Circuit to overturn the district court’s ruling in *Brackeen v. Zinke* have been filed by:

- U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), U.S. Representatives Karen Bass (D-Calif.), Don Bacon (R-Neb.), Betty McCollum (D-Minn.), Tom Cole (R-Okla.), and Don Young (R-Alaska).
The Attorneys General of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin. These states are home to 85 percent of federally recognized Indian tribes and more than half of the American Indian and Alaska Native population.

- 325 tribal governments and 57 tribal organizations.
- 30 child welfare organizations.
- Law professors from more than 20 law schools.

We remain committed to protecting the Constitutionality of ICWA for Native children, families, and Tribes. We firmly believe that our rights as protected by the Indian Child Welfare Act will be affirmed and reinforced.

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