

COUNTY CLERK / REGISTER OF DEEDS

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LISA POSTHUMUS LYONS
County Clerk / Register

September 23, 2022

The Honorable Debra Haaland
Secretary of the Interior
United States Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C., 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

I am writing to you today to express my support for the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians' petition for federal recognition. The United States Department of the Interior must approve the tribe's request immediately.

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians' petition has already been delayed numerous times, including a delay in the final phase of this process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They have waited patiently on the Department of the Interior's "active consideration" list since 2013, and it should not have to wait any longer.

Once they receive federal recognition the tribe can access useful, supportive resources such as tuition, healthcare, and housing assistance. These opportunities are only granted to tribes that are federally recognized, and the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians should be able to access these benefits with no further delay.

The Grand River Bands tribe has long been a vital part of Kent County and the community of western Michigan. They have agreements with the federal government dating as far back as the 18th century, and their recognition has garnered support from both sides of the political aisle. The federal government should move forward with their recognition immediately.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Posthumus Lyons
Clerk/Register of Deeds
Kent County, Michigan