

September 7, 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,

Please accept this letter in support of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians' petition for federal recognition. I respectfully urge the U.S. Department of the Interior to approve the tribe's request.

Grand River Bands has waited a long time to get to this point having spent too many years on the Department's "active consideration list" dating back to 2013. The tribe was in the final phase of federal recognition when the process was delayed once again due to the COVID-19.

Recognition is critical to the wellbeing of the Grand River Bands. As you know, it will provide much needed access to resources that are only available to federally recognized tribes. Benefits that include tuition programs, health care and housing assistance. Grand River Bands members have worked long and hard for this recognition and it should be granted without delay.

West Michigan is proud of its amazing history and the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians is a part of that history. The tribe has deep roots here and is a valued part of our community. Its tribal members live and work in West Michigan, and the Grand River Bands is heavily involved in West Michigan communities, from working to restore the rapids in the Grand River in Grand Rapids, to playing a central role in community events that bring people together.

The tribe has widespread support for recognition and I urge you to approve the Grand River Bands' petition as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Posthumus", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Bryan Posthumus
State Representative