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Truth  Compassion

Remember Who We Are

January 17, 2025

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
Senate Comm. on Homeland Security &
Governmental Affairs
340 Senate Dirksen Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member
Senate Comm. on Homeland Security &
Governmental Affairs
340 Senate Dirksen Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: SRST Support for South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem to serve as the Secretary, Dept of Homeland Security

As the Chairwoman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, I, Janet Alkire, write to support Governor Kristi Noem's nomination to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. As an elected woman to a leadership position in a more traditional and conservative state such as South Dakota, where women in leadership tend to face challenges unlike our male counterparts, I empathize with the Governor and her ability to continue to stand strong in stature and demeanor despite any negative persuasions she must robustly contend.

Though it is no great mystery that Governor Noem has had to face conflict amongst the Tribal Nations of South Dakota, it is my own perspective that Governor Noem has personally shared her fair intent to rebuild the relationships with the Tribal Nations as she has promised her support to Standing Rock should she be officially appointed to serve as Secretary at the DHS.


On multiple occasions, Governor Noem has invited the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe to her table at the South Dakota State Capitol to enter into meaningful discussions. She has recognized the many challenges we face and her future ability to address those challenges at the DHS, such as the extended length of time it takes to hire police officers (by the time they are even considered, those candidates have more than likely taken jobs elsewhere where the requirements are not as stringent and hiring process is only a few months. At Standing Rock, it can take over one year to get an officer hired.) Governor Noem understands the tribes' hiring challenges and is committed to helping in her position as Secretary. The Missing and Murdered Indigenous People crisis has reached epidemic proportions on reservations across North and South Dakota. Violent Crimes are a regular occurrence on our reservation. Drug trafficking is nearly invisible to the average citizen on Standing Rock and though we may be short-staffed, our officers work tirelessly to arrest those who come to Standing Rock to peddle their illegal wares. Public Safety is vital to the economic development not only to Standing Rock, but to our surrounding communities who depend on our casinos for success within their own local economies.

It is of great excitement and enthusiasm that our North Dakota Governor, Doug Burgum, will be at the helm of the Department of Interior, and my hopes remain high that you will feel the same about Governor Kristi Noem at the helm of the Department of Homeland Security. These two Governors understand the needs in Indian Country and what words like "Tribal Sovereignty", "Jurisdiction", and "Consultation" mean to the indigenous people. I hope that Governor Noem rises to fulfill the commitments she has made to the Tribes in South Dakota, and will do the same with all Tribes across this great Nation in her position as Secretary.

It is with great honor that my expressed words of gratitude for consideration of Governor Noem as the next Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security, are able to be heard by you esteemed members of this Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Wopila Tanka. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Janet Alkire, Chairwoman
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe