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MEDIA STATEMENT



ICWA Upheld by Supreme Court *National Native organization responds*

Washington, DC —Today, the Supreme Court upheld the Indian Child Welfare Act under consideration in *Haaland v. Brackeen*. **The following statement from Judith LeBlanc (Caddo), Executive Director of Native Organizers Alliance (NOA), can be quoted in-full or in-part.**

“Today is a victory for Native communities and Tribal sovereignty. The Supreme Court’s decision to uphold protections under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) respects the rights of sovereign nations to make decisions about the well-being and care of their youngest Tribal citizens.

“After decades of the forced removal of our Native children from their homes, this is a small win in the larger fight to maintain Tribal sovereignty and cultural continuity for generations to come.

“Four hundred ninety-seven Tribal Nations, 62 Native-led organizations, 23 states and DC, 87 congresspeople, and 27 child welfare and adoption organizations filed an amicus brief against the plaintiffs because ICWA has proven that Native children benefit from being a part of Native communities. ICWA has protected Native children, ensuring their ongoing sense of community and cultural identity by prioritizing keeping them with family (including extended family) or members of their Tribe. Keeping children within their communities and connected to their culture is a child welfare practice that should be expanded, not eliminated.

*“While today’s victory is to be celebrated, this will not be the last time a case against Tribal rights will be brought to the courts. *Haaland V. Brackeen* is part of a larger campaign to undermine Tribal sovereignty to set a precedent that guts the legal infrastructure that codifies Tribal sovereignty. Native Organizers Alliance will always be involved in the grassroots movement to protect ICWA and other laws protecting Tribal Sovereignty at all levels. Community organizing in our Native communities has led to codifying ICWA into law in twelve states, and six states are considering similar legislation. We are not just sitting by as opponents, funded by the fossil fuel extractive industries, try to dismantle our sovereignty, destroy our lands and harm our children.*

“Native Organizers Alliance will continue to hold governments accountable for protecting and upholding our sovereignty.”

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About Native Organizers Alliance:

Native Organizers Alliance taps into the political power of our people, and the wisdom of our ancestors, to drive change in Indian Country. We provide Native peoples with the training, resources, and connections that are needed to transform policy, strengthen community, and protect our sacred places.