

Resolution Urging the Department of Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs to Heed Gayogoḥó:nq' Removal of Clint Halftown from Representative Role

WHEREAS, the sovereign nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy lived sustainably since time immemorial in the region that now includes most of New York State, before the arrival of European colonists, and

WHEREAS, the Two Row Wampum Treaty¹ (the first agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and European settlers in 1613, the principles of which were later extended to the United States) commits to noninterference in one another's governance affairs while proceeding in relationships of peace and friendship, and

WHEREAS, according to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's Great Law of Peace, the governing body of the Gayogoḥó:nq' (Cayuga Nation) is the Council of Chiefs, and

WHEREAS, according to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's Great Law of Peace, Chiefs are chosen by Clanmothers in a consensus process known as coming to "one mind" amongst Nation citizens, Clanmothers, and Chiefs, with their role then confirmed through a "large condolence" process, and

WHEREAS, as the Gayogoḥó:nq' Council of Chiefs and Clanmothers has reminded the federal government, within the Gayogoḥó:nq' system of governance, "there is no role of 'Nation Representative'"; however, as a courtesy to help ease the U.S. government's administrative burden of carrying out its contractual and treaty obligations to Indigenous Nations, the Nation's governing body has previously designated such a representative to serve as a point of contact, and

WHEREAS, the person currently recognized by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as the above-described representative of the Cayuga Nation, Clint Halftown, had been acting as a temporary clan representative during an interim period until a Chief was condoled to serve on the Council, but was removed from his representative position by his Clanmother and the Council of Chiefs through governance processes of the Great Law of Peace, as publicly described by the Gayogoḥó:nq' on multiple occasions, and

WHEREAS, in open contradiction of the Gayogoḥó:nq' Council of Chiefs and Clanmothers, the DOI and BIA continue to recognize Clint Halftown as a representative of the Cayuga Nation, and

WHEREAS, Clint Halftown ordered the February 22, 2020 overnight demolition of Gayogoḥó:nq' community buildings in Seneca Falls, including a schoolhouse used for learning language and longhouse ways, and gardens, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the principles of the Two Row Wampum, the Gayogoḥó:nq' have put forth requests for help (including within a May 15, 2021 letter from the Council of Chiefs), asking those within the U.S. to hold the U.S. government accountable for its failure to heed the Council of Chiefs and Clanmothers' removal of Halftown, and

WHEREAS, in 2013 the Town of Dryden passed a resolution in support of the Two-Row Wampum Renewal campaign, calling on citizens of the Town and on the State of New York to build positive and respectful relations with their Native neighbors and all Native Peoples, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Board of Dryden urges the DOI and BIA to immediately cease recognizing Clint Halftown as a representative of the Nation

RESOLVED, further, that the Town of Dryden will engage with the Gayogoḥó:nq' Council of Chiefs and Clanmothers in all matters pertaining to the Town's government-to-government relationship with the Nation

RESOLVED, further, that a copy of this resolution will be sent to the following officials:

US President Joe Biden
US Secretary of the Interior Debra Anne Haaland
US Department of Interior Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary -- Indian Affairs Bryan Newland;
US BIA Director Darryl LaCounte;
US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) -- Eastern Regional Director Kimberly Bouchard;
NY Governor Kathy Hochul;
US Senator Charles Schumer;
US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand;
US Congressperson John Katko
US Congressperson Tom Reed;
NYS Assemblyperson Anna Kelles;
NYS Senator Thomas O'Mara;

This resolution will take effect immediately.