

Kevin Wright
Chairman



Tribal Administration
187 Oyate Circle
Lower Brule, SD 57548
Phone: (605) 473-5561
Fax: (605) 473-5554

April 23, 2015

Kevin Washburn
Assistant Secretary of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
US Department of the Interior

Dear Assistant Secretary Washburn,

I am writing in my capacity as the Acting Chairman of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribal Council in order to notify you of a serious situation developing at the Lower Brule Sioux Reservation that has put at risk the transparent, accountable, and appropriate use of federal funds provided to the Tribe through 638 Contracts and other means. This situation has forced me to request that the federal government suspend further transfers of federal funds to the Tribe until you can ensure that government funds are subject to actual Tribal Council oversight and accountability. I am also requesting that federal agencies expeditiously investigate allegations of past misuse of federal funds.

Since the sudden illness and untimely death of the Honorable Michael Jandreau, the longtime Chairman of the Tribe, I have assumed the role of Chairman as specified under the Constitution and Bylaws of the Tribe, notably under Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution's Bylaws.

In my capacity as Acting Chairman, I and a supermajority of Tribal Council members have attempted to obtain information about the Tribe's financial situation and its use of funds (including federal funds) in order to fulfill the Tribal Council's Constitutional role to authorize and oversee the use of public funds in a responsible and transparent manner. Under Article VI of our Constitution and Article I of its Bylaws, the Tribal Council has sole responsibility for the oversight and disbursement of these and other funds.

However, certain unelected Tribal Government staff that are not Tribal Members have refused to provide any financial information regarding the Tribe's finances, its management and use of federal funds, or other information to myself and several other Tribal Council members who are attempting to fulfill our duties and responsibilities as elected officials. At present, those individuals are handling federal and other funds in secret and without the Tribe's Constitutionally-required oversight and authorization.

This situation is extremely troubling, especially since Human Rights Watch and the press have published detailed reports regarding serious allegations of financial management by the Tribal Government, including the misuse of millions of dollars in federal funds. Some of these allegations relate to the activities of two current, four former (including the late-Chairman) Tribal Council officials and their associates. The people refusing to provide financial

information are some of the same people that were involved in the management of public funds at the time the alleged mismanagement occurred.

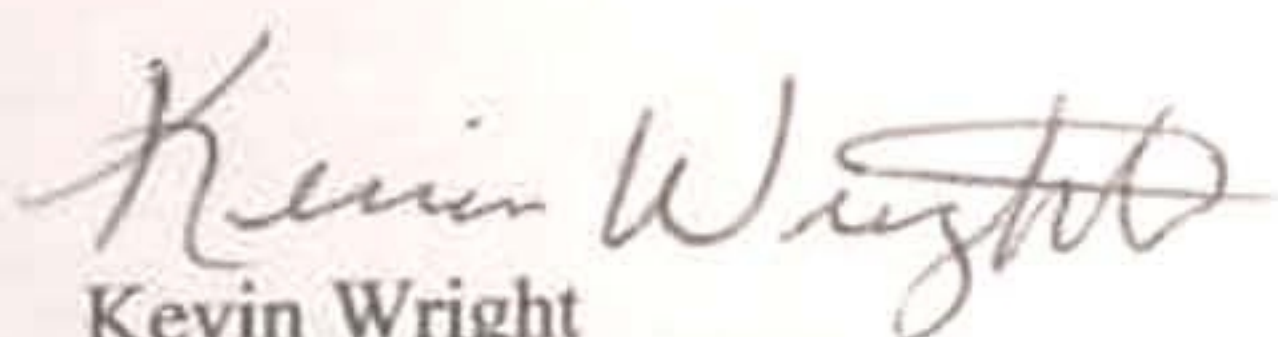
I and several of my colleagues on the Tribal Council are committed to a full investigation into allegations financial wrongdoing, such as those involving a federal loan guarantee provided for the purchase of Westrock or the diversion of federal funds. We intend to commission a forensic audit or other investigations to examine past government activities and are fully committed to government transparency and accountability.

We strongly encourage and welcome federal investigations into these allegations and are committed to work with federal agencies, such as the Department of Interior's Office Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Department of Justice as they examine these matters.

But at present, a handful of individuals refuse to disclose financial information and are essentially managing public funds on their own. I believe this creates a serious risk of further misuse and mismanagement of public funds, including federal funds. Therefore, federal funds should not flow to such individuals without the legal and proper oversight of the current Tribal Council and until the Bureau of Indian Affairs can directly confirm with me as Acting Chairman and other Councilmembers that such oversight is taking place. Otherwise, federal funds are especially vulnerable to further misuse.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person or by teleconference or videoconference at your earliest convenience, given the serious allegations leveled against the government and the difficulties we are facing to ensure transparent and accountable government.

Sincerely,



Kevin Wright
Acting Chairman
Lower Brule Sioux Tribe

Cc: The Lower Brule Sioux Tribal Council

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

The Honorable Jon Tester
Vice-Chairman, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

The Honorable Don Young
Chairman, House Subcommittee on Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs