



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE INTER TRIBAL COUNCIL OF ARIZONA and INTER TRIBAL ASSOCIATION
OF ARIZONA RELEASE JOINT STATEMENT ON HAALAND v. BRACKEEN**

PHOENIX – The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA), and the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona (ITAA), two separate nonprofit organizations representing Tribal Nations in Arizona, released a joint statement adding their voice to the groundswell of support across Indian Country for the Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the Indian Child Welfare Act.

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was enacted in 1978 to protect the well-being and best interests of American Indian children and families. The Haaland v. Brackeen lawsuit was brought by Texas (and previously Indiana and Louisiana) and several individual plaintiffs, who alleged that ICWA was unconstitutional. The case worked its way through the lower courts and ultimately the US Supreme Court. Today, the US Supreme Court released their decision, which was to uphold ICWA.

“Since ICWA’s inception over 40 years ago, the goal has been to provide protection for the wellbeing of American Indian/Alaska Native children by giving preference to American Indian families for foster care and adoptive placement of American Indian children,” says Bernadine Burnette, President of the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona and Regional Vice President of the Western Region of the National Congress of American Indians.

Studies have found that the Indian Child Welfare Act has had positive outcomes for American Indian children – including such factors as higher self-esteem and lower instances of substance abuse.

“Indian Country will continue to stand up for the rights of our children and families -- we applaud today’s Supreme Court decision which affirms the provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act and strengthens tribal sovereignty,” states Shan Lewis, Vice Chairman of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe and President of the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona.

About the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona and the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona

These organizations were established in 1952 to provide a united voice for tribal governments located in the State of Arizona to address common issues of concerns. For more information, please call 602.258.4822.

Ak-Chin Indian Community
Cocopah Indian Tribe
Colorado River Indian Tribes
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Gila River Indian Community
Havasupai Tribe
Hopi Tribe
Hualapai Tribe
Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians
Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Pueblo of Zuni
Quechan Tribe
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
San Carlos Apache Tribe
San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe
Tohono O’odham Nation
Tonto Apache Tribe
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Yavapai-Apache Nation
Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe

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