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PRESS RELEASE

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For More Information

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Agreement in Principle related to Tribal IDs for Voting

Today, the Spirit Lake Nation, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, other Plaintiffs, and the North Dakota Secretary of State in *Brakebill, et. al v. Jaeger* and *Spirit Lake et. al v. Jaeger* are pleased to announce an agreement in principle to settle these two federal cases and to address the claims related to tribal IDs for voting and other ballot access concerns of the Native American residents in North Dakota.

Last week, Governor Burgum approved the request for emergency administrative rules promulgated by the Secretary of State related to tribal IDs and supplemental documentation for the purposes of voting as well as validation of set aside ballots marked by Native Americans for inclusion in the final vote tally of an election. During a mediation conducted in-person on Thursday, February 6, 2020, at the North Dakota Capitol, the Plaintiffs and the Secretary of State recognized that the temporary, emergency rules were a first step forward to addressing some of the claims in the two federal lawsuits. At this mediation, the parties agreed to additional terms of settlement aimed at voter protection which will become part of a court-ordered Consent Decree. The Consent Decree will ensure all Native Americans who are qualified electors can vote, relieve certain burdens on the Tribes related to determining residential street addresses for their tribal members and issuing tribal IDs, and ensure ongoing cooperation through mutual collaboration between the State and the Tribes to address concerns or issues that may arise in the future.

While formal approval of the final agreement by the Spirit Lake Nation's Council and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's Council will be necessary, the agreement in principal has been signed by legal counsel for the Plaintiffs and for the Secretary of State. We look forward to the Court's final action on the Consent Decree and we will be working together on the details outlined in the emergency Rules and on the final agreement to ensure that Native Americans who are qualified electors will be able to vote in 2020 and beyond.