



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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Transmitted via email to:  
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March 30, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC 20554

## **Re: Support for the Applications of Tribal Leader Representatives to FCC Native Nations Communications Task Force**

Dear Chairman Pai,

We write on behalf of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) to express our strong support for the applications of three USET SPF Tribal leaders to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Native Nations Communications Task Force. USET SPF is a non-profit, inter-tribal organization representing 27 federally recognized Tribal Nations from Texas to Florida and up to Maine<sup>1</sup>. USET SPF is dedicated to enhancing the development of federally recognized Tribal Nations, to improving the capabilities of Tribal governments, and assisting USET SPF Member Tribal Nations in dealing effectively with public policy issues and in serving the broad needs of Indian people.

As an agency of the United States government, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has a trust responsibility and obligation to Tribal Nations in its mission to regulate America's communications facilities and services. This includes the obligation to obtain the advice and guidance of Tribal Nations in order to protect Tribal sovereignty, cultural resources, and public health in the deployment of communications infrastructure. To ensure that the concerns of Tribal governments are considered in relevant Commission proceedings, the Commission created the FCC-Native Nations Broadband Task Force in 2011. Renewed this year as the Native Nations Communications Task Force to reflect a broader purview, the FCC is seeking regionally-balanced primary and alternate membership from Tribal leaders with diverse professional experience and backgrounds.

USET SPF agrees that the Task Force membership must reflect the diversity of Indian Country, including Tribal leaders from USET SPF member Tribal Nations. With this in mind, we extend our unqualified support to the following Tribal leader applicants in no particular order:

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<sup>1</sup> USET SPF member Tribal Nations include: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (TX), Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians (ME), Catawba Indian Nation (SC), Cayuga Nation (NY), Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (NC), Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (ME), Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (LA), Mashantucket Pequot Indian Tribe (CT), Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (MA), Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida (FL), Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MS), Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (CT), Narragansett Indian Tribe (RI), Oneida Indian Nation (NY), Pamunkey Indian Tribe (VA), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township (ME), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point (ME), Penobscot Indian Nation (ME), Poarch Band of Creek Indians (AL), Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (NY), Seminole Tribe of Florida (FL), Seneca Nation of Indians (NY), Shinnecock Indian Nation (NY), Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana (LA), and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (MA).

*"Because there is strength in Unity"*

1. **Chairwoman Cheryl Andrews-Maltais, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah);**
2. **Chief Michael Conners, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe; and**
3. **Chief Bill Harris, Catawba Indian Nation.**


Each of these Tribal leaders is dedicated to their people, the Tribal Nations of the USET SPF region, and the protection of Tribal sovereignty. USET SPF feels they are well-positioned to represent our interests on the Task Force.

In closing, USET SPF urges you to strongly consider the aforementioned Tribal leader applicants, as you receive nominations for the FCC Native Nations Communications Task Force. Should you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Liz Malerba, USET Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, at (202)-624-3550 or by email at [lmalerba@usetinc.org](mailto:lmalerba@usetinc.org).

Sincerely,



Chief Kirk Francis  
President



Kitcki Carroll  
USET Executive Director