

Stockbridge-Munsee Community

BAND OF MOHICAN INDIANS

TRIBAL COUNCIL OFFICES

February 12, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20003

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Chairmen Cruz and Guthrie and Ranking Members Cantwell and Pallone:

I serve as the representative for the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) on the FirstNet Tribal Advisory Group (TAG) and the President of the Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican Indians. In my role on the FirstNet TAG, I also participate in the statutorily established FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) -- representing the interests of Tribal Nations. I am proud of NCAI's involvement in the FirstNet Authority's governance structure, advising the PSAC, FirstNet Board of Directors, FirstNet Authority, and the FirstNet contractor on the needs of public safety serving Tribal Nations.

Tribal lands have disproportionately been underserved by broadband investment, and limited grant funding and other resource constraints have made it difficult for many Tribal Nations to fully equip their public safety and emergency personnel with the necessary technology and communication capabilities. The FirstNet program has made significant progress to address these challenges – by expanding access to wireless broadband to previously underserved areas and increasing the availability of advanced technology solutions for public safety serving Tribal Nations.

As directed by the United States Congress, the FirstNet Authority has a mission to develop a nationwide wireless broadband network with rural coverage requirements to ensure the network effectively serves first responders across the country, including those serving tribal communities. In the initial phase of FirstNet network buildout, significant progress was made to expand FirstNet coverage in tribal communities, resulting in a 65 percent increase in FirstNet wireless coverage on tribal lands between 2018 – 2023 and more than 565 new FirstNet cell towers serving Tribal Nations.

On behalf of NCAI, I have enclosed the resolution approved at the NCAI Annual Conference in November 2025:

SEA-25-033: "Calling on Congress to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) before its 2027 terminations to support tribal public safety and emergency operations."

As stated in the resolution, NCAI urges prompt action by the U.S. Congress to strike the statutory sunset language in P.L. 112-96. NCAI supports reauthorization of the FirstNet Authority to continue critical investments in FirstNet wireless broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas, including on Tribal lands, and to maintain the representation by NCAI and other regional and public safety Tribal organizations within the FirstNet program governance structure to ensure the needs of Tribal first responders continue to inform the operation and evolution of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.

We appreciate the bipartisan leadership of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce as your committees evaluate FirstNet's progress and future. NCAI stands ready to work with you and your colleagues to ensure that FirstNet continues to meet the needs of Tribal Nations and all first responders nationwide.

Thank you for your continued leadership and for your commitment to public safety. Please do not hesitate to contact us if NCAI can be of assistance as reauthorization efforts move forward.

Sincerely,



Shannon Holsey, President – Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican Indians

NCAI Representative
Tribal Advisory Group, FirstNet Authority
Public Safety Advisory Committee, FirstNet Authority

Cc: Members of the Senate Commerce Committee
Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee
Mike Adkinson, Acting Chair, FirstNet Authority Board of Directors
Arielle Roth, Assistant Secretary, NTIA, U.S. Department of Commerce
Larry Wright, Jr., Executive Director, National Congress of American Indians