

# National Indian Health Board



November 8, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth H.O.B  
Washington, DC 20515

*RE: Honor the Treaties and Seat Kim Teehee as the Cherokee Nation delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives*

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

On behalf of the National Indian Health Board and the 574 federally recognized Tribes we serve, I write to support the seating of the Cherokee Nation's delegate, Kim Teehee, in the U.S. House of Representatives as guaranteed in the 1785 Treaty of Hopewell and the 1835 Treaty of New Echota. It is time the United States honor its promise to the Cherokee Nation.

We call upon Congress to honor the United States' trust responsibility and treaty obligations by naming Kim Teehee as the Tribe's first delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. The Cherokee Nation exchanged millions of acres of land for the agreements and promises in the treaties delegated between the Cherokee Nation and the United States. As such, Article 6 of the Constitution states the Constitution "shall be the supreme law of the land" including any treaties authorized by the United States<sup>1</sup>. As guaranteed in both the 1785 and 1835 treaties, the Cherokee Nation secured the right to send a delegate to Congress. Moreover, the Treaty of 1866 reaffirms all previous treaties between the Cherokee Nation and the United States<sup>2</sup>.

Delegate-Designee Kim Teehee is well respected across Tribal communities and in Washington D.C. and is well qualified. As the inaugural Senior Policy Advisor for Native American Affairs, Kim worked with the Obama Administration in the White House Domestic Policy Council for three years. Kim worked with federal agencies to develop and implement policies focused on environmental justice, Tribal consultation, Tribal self-determination, economic growth, public safety, health care, and education. As a result, Kim helped implement the Presidential Memorandum on Tribal consultation and an Executive Order on Improving American Indian and Alaska Native Educational Opportunities and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/article-6/clause-2/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47190>

Ms. Teehee guided the Administration's support for the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and addressed the U.N. Permanent Forum on issues affecting the world's indigenous peoples. Playing a key advocate, Teehee helped secure the passage of legislation to hold all perpetrators of domestic violence accountable for their crimes against Native American women.

She also served as a Senior Advisor to the U.S. House of Representatives Native American Caucus Co-Chair, Rep. Dale Kildeer (D-MI). Serving the bi-partisan Caucus for nearly 12 years, she established an impressive record of accomplishments on a wide array of Native American issues.

Today, she is the Director of Government Relations for the Cherokee Nation and Senior Vice President of Government Relations for Cherokee Nation Businesses<sup>3</sup>.

The Treaties of New Echota and Hopewell have no expiration date. It is time for the U.S. government to fulfill its promise and uphold its legal obligation. We urge Congress to take immediate action by seating Delegate Teehee during this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacy A. Bohlen".

Stacy A. Bohlen (Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa)

Chief Executive Officer

National Indian Health Board

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/kimberly-teehee>