



SCHAGHTICOKE TRIBAL NATION CONNECTICUT

To Whom It May Concern:

September 27, 2016

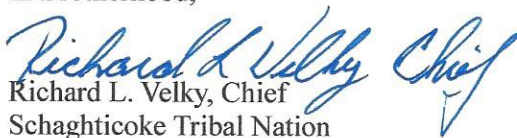
My name is Richard L. Velky. I am Chief of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation (STN) located in Kent, Connecticut, and have held that position since November 1987 and with our Tribal Council, have proudly represented our Tribe.

My purpose in writing you is to recognize Tom Rodgers and attest to his personal strengths in his support and his pursuit of justice for Native Americans - not just for STN but throughout Indian Country.

To understand why STN would recognize these traits displayed, I will tell you a bit about the Schaghticoke people and our unrelenting quest for Federal Recognition. The Schaghticoke's are a state recognized tribe whose origins trace back to the late 17th Century, recognized by Connecticut continuously since Colonial days. We are a tribe that sought Federal Recognition beginning in 1981 and were successful in January 2004. Our Tribal history and community are well documented and met the regulatory criteria for acknowledgment, but with recognition came a political maelstrom by Connecticut's Governor, Attorney General and Congressional Delegation that ultimately stripped STN of its Federal Recognition. STN has never given up on achieving restoration of its recognition. By intervention of the Creator, Tom Rodgers was introduced to our Tribe. His perseverance and strong work ethic - available nearly 24/7 - allows him to not just participate, but walk with us in this journey to correct the injustice that was done to our Nation. As you can well imagine, STN was dismayed by what occurred, but Tom has validated our focus on restoration of recognition and fortified the Tribe's ethical stance in pursuit of fairness and justice. Nearly every conversation begins with this message.

Tom's efforts for Indian rights and his earned respect within Indian Country has brought many other Tribal leaders to our cause. Tom's intelligence, knowledge, history and ethical conduct make him stand tall among his peers. His words ring true and his honesty comes from the heart. We all have misfortunes in life. One of mine was not having known Tom Rodgers sooner. I would highly recommend him to your organization.

In Brotherhood,


Richard L. Velky, Chief
Schaghticoke Tribal Nation