



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Executive Branch of Tribal Government
Office of the Chief Executive

June 23, 2025

Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski
Vice Chair Brian Schatz
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Supports the Nomination of William Kirkland for
Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Vice Chairman Schatz,

On behalf of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, I am writing to express our support for the nomination of William Kirkland, a citizen of the Navajo Nation, to be the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior. The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (“MLBO” or “Band”) is a federally-recognized, sovereign, and independent Indian Tribal Government with approximately 5,000 members. The Band is responsible for providing critical governmental services to Band members, including programs providing healthcare, public safety, land management, housing, and education services across its 61,000-acre Reservation in East-Central Minnesota.

We believe Mr. Kirkland brings leadership experience in areas relevant to Indian Affairs, having previously served as Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs from 2017 to 2021. The Band joins with Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren in endorsing Mr. Kirkland’s nomination given his prior experience and his broad support throughout Indian Country. His track record indicates a personal commitment to building and maintaining strong relationships with Tribal leaders. The Mille Lacs Band is confident that Kirkland will be the right choice in fulfilling the treaty and trust responsibilities to Tribal Nations, and in advancing the enduring federal policies of Indian Self-Determination and Tribal Self-Governance.

This is the type of supportive leadership that we hope to have in Washington, D.C. For this reason, we encourage the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to swiftly approve the nomination of Mr. Kirkland as Interior’s Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs and to promptly secure confirmation of his nomination by the full U.S. Senate.

Miigwech,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Virgil Wind", is written over a horizontal line.

Virgil Wind
Chief Executive
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

cc: Senator Tina Smith