



## *Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians*

*Executive Branch of Tribal Government*

*Office of the Chief Executive*

*Via E-mail*

January 28, 2025

**To: Mille Lacs Band Employees**

**Re: U.S. Presidential Executive Order**

Dear Mille Lacs Band Employees,

Aaniin. Today, I am reaching out to share important news about an executive order issued by President Trump that temporarily freezes federal grants and loans. This pause is part of a broader review of federal programs, and it is not yet clear how much, if at all, this order impacts the funding that many tribes, including the Mille Lacs Band, rely on to provide essential services to our communities.

While this executive order raises concerns, it is important not to panic or overreact. Our talented staff and advisors are working with federal elected officials and agency contacts within the Trump Administration to understand the full scope of the impacts of the executive order. It is also important to remember that our Band is very fortunate to have a number of revenue-generating assets that give us flexibility and financial resilience during periods of economic uncertainty.

And let me be clear: the Mille Lacs Band is not standing idle during these uncertain times. Our financial team is already working to evaluate our available resources, and we are implementing contingency plans to ensure that our dedicated employees continue to be paid to provide essential benefits and services to Band members without interruption. We have weathered challenges before, and together we will weather this one as well.

I want to emphasize the strength and resilience of the Mille Lacs Band. We have always stood united in the face of adversity, and this is no different. In the coming days and weeks, we will advocate strongly to ensure our voices are heard, and that federal leaders understand the impact of these decisions on sovereign tribal nations like ours.

We also remain hopeful that this is a temporary obstacle and that Indian Country funding is not the target of the executive order. For generations, these funds have been a part of the federal government's trust responsibility to honor the treaties made with our people. We expect our federal government to continue to honor its commitments to Indigenous nations, and we will work tirelessly to ensure that those promises are kept.

**Letter from Chief Executive Virgil Wind to Band Employees**

**Re: U.S. Presidential Executive Order**

**January 28, 2025**

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To every one of you—whether you serve in education, health care, public safety, social services, housing, resource conservation, or other critical roles—know that your work matters deeply to our community. You are the reason we are able to serve our Band members. Your dedication inspires me every day, and we will take care of you just as you have taken care of us.

As we move forward, I will keep you updated on any developments. In the meantime, please remain focused on your roles, stay committed to our mission, and continue to serve the Mille Lacs Band with the excellence and care you always have.

Chi-miigwech for your hard work and your unwavering dedication to the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Together, we will navigate this challenge and emerge even stronger.

Sincerely,



Virgil Wind  
Chief Executive