



National
Congress of
American
Indians



AAIA
Association on American Indian Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Amory Zschach
E: amory@nicwa.org
P: (503) 222-4044, ext. 133
W: www.nicwa.org

OFFICIAL STATEMENT:

Joint Statement on the Federal District Court of Northern Texas denying to stay the court's ruling on constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act

(Portland, OR, October 30, 2018)—The National Indian Child Welfare Association, the National Congress of American Indians, the Association on American Indian Affairs, and the Native American Rights Fund are disappointed that the Federal District Court of Northern Texas has denied a motion to stay their decision in *Brackeen v. Zinke* pending appeal by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. This will likely cause great uncertainty and disruption for hundreds of vulnerable Indian children and their families who are currently in state child welfare systems within the states of Texas, Louisiana, and Indiana, especially as we enter the holiday season and the Fifth Circuit moves forward with what may be months of proceedings. Indian children and families deserve better, and we hope that the Fifth Circuit will move quickly to consider a motion to stay this lower federal court decision.

###

About the National Indian Child Welfare Association:

The National Indian Child Welfare Association works to support the safety, health, and spiritual strength of Native children along the broad continuum of their lives. NICWA promotes building tribal capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect through positive systems change at the state, federal, and tribal level. For more information, visit www.nicwa.org

About the National Congress of American Indians:

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians is the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. NCAI advocates on behalf of tribal governments and communities, promoting strong tribal-federal government-to-government policies, and promoting a better understanding among the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people and rights. For more information, visit www.ncai.org.

About the Association on American Indian Affairs:

AAIA is the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity. The Association was formed in 1922 to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination and self-sufficiency. Throughout its 96-year history, the Association has provided national advocacy on watershed issues that support sovereignty and culture, while working at the grassroots level with Tribes to support the implementation of programs that improve lives on the ground. For more information, visit www.indian-affairs.org.

About the Native American Rights Fund:

Since 1971, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) has provided legal assistance to Indian tribes, organizations, and individuals nationwide who might otherwise have gone without adequate representation. Throughout its history, NARF has impacted tens of thousands of Indian people in its work for more than 250 tribes. NARF has defended the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) for decades, and will continue to do so. For more information, visit www.narf.org.