



**Daniel Mead**  
Acting Marshal

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**Chad C. Harsha**  
Attorney General

Dear Law Enforcement Partner:

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Cherokee Nation Marshal Service and office of the Attorney General regarding the recent opinion released by the U.S. Department of Interior and related to the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma (“UKB”).

We are writing this letter to clarify that opinion as it relates to your longstanding law enforcement partnership with the Cherokee Nation. To be clear, the Cherokee Nation continues to exercise jurisdiction over the Cherokee Nation Reservation as it always has, and our inherent authority to do so remains unchanged by the recent DOI opinion.

The opinion, which was released in the waning days of the outgoing Biden Administration speaks to a very narrow issue — the process by which UKB can take land into trust under specific circumstances. Notably, the DOI opinion did not expand trust land for the UKB, which remains limited to their 76 acre parcel in Tahlequah. Likewise, the opinion did not grant any additional criminal jurisdiction for the UKB within the Cherokee Nation Reservation.

It appears that the UKB, as they often do, is attempting to mischaracterize that opinion as providing criminal jurisdiction in various communities — which the UKB does not have— and has proposed cross-deputation agreements for law enforcement services. Entering into cross deputation agreements with UKB would be inconsistent with federal and state law and may subject you and your local government to liability for the unlawful and unprofessional actions of the UKB officers.

UKB is no stranger to liability related to the reckless and unlawful actions of their officers. As you may be aware, UKB has attempted to exercise unlawful criminal jurisdiction in very recent incidents, which has resulted in criminal cases being dismissed by Cherokee Nation and state courts, victims unable to receive justice, and litigation against UKB officers. The UKB’s unlawful actions are dangerous and undermine our shared public safety goals and long-standing relationships between the Cherokee Nation and your law enforcement agency.

We value our law enforcement partnerships with your local agency and will continue to do so in a spirit of mutual respect for the jurisdiction we share over our communities and more than 90 cross deputation agreements that we enforce across the Cherokee Nation Reservation. The ability to exercise that jurisdiction and related agreements does not extend to the UKB and

never has. The UKB's attempt to imagine jurisdiction where it does not exist must be rejected to protect public safety and the well-being of our communities.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further.



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Daniel Mead



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Chad Harsha