

Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution Reform Delegation Declaration Statement Working Paper

Beginning Steps

- * *While there are no rules about how to start a declaration, most begin with an introduction of the person/group making the statement.*
- * *Write an Introduction and Declaration Statement setting out the information.*
- * *We are not expected to speak like an attorney, and it is better to tell what we know in our own words in a simple fashion.*
- * *What needs to be corrected or revised?*
- * *Summarize your declaration in a Closing Statement – What you/we want to occur.*

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- Failure by the U.S. government to fully recognize the six Bands/Tribes as separate, sovereign Nations who have the right to exercise their own sovereignty and self-determination rights as independent and distinct Nations without any oversight.
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Introduction Statement

The MCT Constitution Reform Delegation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe consists of delegates representing the Bands/Tribes currently under the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Organization. We have been charged with the responsibility of recommending revisions to the current MCT Constitution.

The MCT Constitution Reform Delegation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe provides the reader with a declaration statement from our work.

Declaration Statement

Through a review of the MCT's historical events and the recognition of each respective Band/Tribes inherent sovereignty and self-determination rights, it becomes essential for the six sovereign Nations to consider re-forming or dissolving the political relationship imposed on them by U.S. Law and BIA regulation currently enforceable by the Secretary of the Interior.

This political relationship mandated a legal connection without our ancestors united consent. In doing so, the U.S. government swept aside the independence and value system by which our people lived for thousands of years. We governed in alignment with the Laws of Nature, with respect for the powers of the earth and respect for each other and all living things the Creator

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gifted to us. These cultural values are not recognized, acknowledged, or implemented within the current MCT Constitution and its organization.

To continue to accept an organizational structure imposed by the Federal Government means we accept the oppression tactics they continue to use “to keep us in our place.”

Declaration Points

A decent respect for our people, our culture, and our traditions require that we, the MCTCRD declare the causes which compel us to recommend these changes to the current MCT structure and its constitution.

During our review of the MCT Constitution and its organization, the MCTCR Delegation has come to the following conclusions:

- The MCT is not a Band/Tribe but instead just an organization.
- The Secretary of the Interior (*or Bureau of Indian Affairs*) has mandated that the MCT has the authority to oversee tribal sovereignty-related responsibilities such as enrollments, land, and elections. This is not the authority or responsibility typical of an organization. This authority rests within each Band/Tribe’s inherent sovereignty rights as a sovereign Nation, with further acknowledgment of being legally recognized as separate and distinct people.
- The people under the MCT did not create the organization and its constitution. The Band/Tribes were forced to accept the MCT, which outlined/promoted the U.S. government’s own needs and expectations, without any recognized input from the people of the Bands/Tribes.
- The current MCT structure does not effectively support the needs of the Bands/Tribes and their people today. The people should determine their needs, not the U.S. government, under our sovereignty and self-determination rights.
- A general analysis of the MCT organization has been conducted. The irregularities that have been identified within this report need further review and consideration before we can effectively compile recommendations to revise the current constitution.
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Recommendations/Revisions

The MCTCR is recommending the following revisions:

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- Move forward to create and design an alliance partnership.
- Re-form or dissolve the current MCT organizational structure.
- Establish separate constitutions for each Nation.
- Begin to take action to remove/lessen the authority of the Secretary of the Interior.
- Do not revise the current constitution; instead, create our guiding documents under our own authority.
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Closing Declaration Statement

(I deliberately did not draft a closing statement since the rest of the document needs to be completed before writing the summary closing statement.)

Notes for the Closing Declaration Statement

(Example from the Declaration of Independence)

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Citations

<https://legalbeagle.com/>

www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript