



NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN COURT JUDGES ASSOCIATION

SERVING TRIBAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS SINCE 1969

1942 BROADWAY, SUITE 215 / BOULDER, CO 80308 | PHONE 303.449.4112 | FAX 303.449.4038

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Boulder, CO: The Board of Directors of the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA)—the only membership association of tribal court judges and tribal court personnel in the nation—is concerned by the recent reports that the Nooksack Tribe terminated a tribal court judge because of a decision she rendered in an on-going disenrollment dispute. Although the NAICJA Board takes no position on the underlying controversy, the media coverage suggests that the judge was terminated for ruling against the tribal council. If that proves correct, the action represents a clear threat to judicial independence.

The Board of Directors of NAICJA recognizes that tribal courts are a key component of tribal sovereignty, and by offering education and support to tribal judiciaries, the association seeks to ensure that tribal court judges advance justice in a fair and impartial way throughout Indian Country. There are over 567 federally recognized tribes in the United States that operate at least 351 tribal courts. These contemporary tribal court systems are well-developed and well-run primarily due to the efforts they have undertaken to pursue justice capacity building, training, and education. NAICJA will continue to provide education and support to all tribal judges and tribal courts so they may continue to act as independent judiciaries and make decisions free from unnecessary external pressure.

Contact Information: Justice Richard Blake
President, Board of Directors
National American Indian Court Judges Association
Email: president@naicja.org
Phone: (303) 449-4112