

Statement by Reyn Leno, Chairman of Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, as seen on Facebook, August 8, 2016.



Reyn Leno

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I am sure many members have questions about the recent appellate court decisions on the dis enrollment cases. I left for a family camping trip on Thursday and had limited phone and Internet access over the weekend. I did get a chance to talk to our Tribal attorney on Saturday. Rob made me aware of the opinions issued on Friday. 1.) The case involving the dis enrollment of Rebecca Crocker was upheld 2.) The cases involving the deceased dis enrolled members was upheld. 3.) The case involving 67 dis enrolled members who refer to themselves as the descendants of Chief Tulumuth was reversed.

From what I understand the case was not reversed because the Tribe or enrollment committee made a mistake or misinterpreted anything or because they met the enrollment requirements, it was simply reversed because the Tribe waited too long to correct the error. The Court did not find that the Treaty signed by Chief Tulumuth was a roll or record and they did not find that they met the enrollment requirements.

It is my opinion that this court opinion is a huge infringement on our Tribal sovereignty to determine our membership and remove people who were enrolled in error. To have the Court force the Tribe to place people on our rolls who do not meet the constitutional requirements of membership is wrong. It is also unfair to other people who have Grand Ronde blood but cannot enroll because they do not have a patent on the roll or because they do not meet blood quantum.

I am sure there will be a lot of questions about this opinion and the impact and hopefully answers will be available over the next few weeks. At this point, it is my understanding the case has been remanded to the Chief Judge to be remanded to the enrollment committee. Because this opinion is so important to our Tribe, it is my hope that our 3 appellate judges would be willing to explain this opinion and answer questions. This statement and opinions are my own as a Tribal member and is not the statement or opinion of the Tribal Council.

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