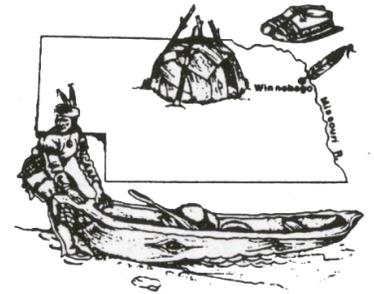


WINNEBAGO TRIBE OF NEBRASKA



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Statement from Frank White, Chairman of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, on the federal raid of Ho-Chunk Inc. offices

WINNEBAGO, Neb (Jan. 31, 2018) – The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska considers the recent activities of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives a direct assault on tribal sovereignty.

On Tuesday, Jan. 30, ATF agents raided four Ho-Chunk, Inc. sites in Winnebago and seized records related to tobacco sales. Ho-Chunk, Inc. is an award winning economic development corporation owned and operated by the Winnebago Tribe. The majority of seized information is subject to an ongoing federal court case in the D.C. Court of Appeals filed by the Tribe.

As a sovereign nation, the Winnebago Tribe implements and enforces its own tax codes, including taxes from tobacco sales. Every cent of the tax collected is utilized to directly improve and enrich the lives of the Winnebago community and its members. The greatest impact includes our Little Priest Tribal College, Community Development Fund, Tribal Health Department, Language Revitalization Department, and Tribal Roads. Additionally, in recent years the taxes helped 40 families purchase new homes through down payment assistance funds.

Additionally the tribe has attempted to negotiate a tobacco tax compact with the state of Nebraska. However, last year, Nebraska canceled our tobacco tax compact negotiations. "We believe the ATF was influenced by the State of Nebraska to investigate Ho-Chunk, Inc. and its subsidiary, Rock River Manufacturing, to help the state gain advantage in an ongoing tax dispute. This is unfortunate because the federal agents' actions place many of our tribal members' jobs at risk," said Frank White, Chairman of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. "The Winnebago Tribe looks forward to settling this dispute and will continue to fight to protect its sovereign status."

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