



## KAW NATION

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November 30, 2020

Honorable Jennifer Ananda, Mayor  
City Hall  
6 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Mayor Ananda,

Greetings, I hope this correspondence finds you well.

On Sunday, October 11, 2020, the Kaw Nation held its quarterly General Council meeting. At that meeting, Kaw Nation citizens overwhelmingly voted in favor of having *I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe* or the "Big Red Rock" (as it is more commonly known) returned to the Kaw people. Please accept this letter as a formal claim of ownership of *I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe*, currently residing in Robinson Park in Lawrence, Kansas, and for its unconditional return to the Kaw Nation.

*I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe* is sacred to the Kaw people and considered an item of cultural patrimony. Our stewardship of this rock and its significance as a spiritual item of prayer for our people is well documented by white anthropologists and witnesses including James Owen Dorsey and George Morehouse. After our removal from Kansas to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1873, our people no longer had access to *I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe* at its original location near the confluence of the Kansas River and Shunganunga Creek, just outside of Topeka. White settlers understood the ceremonial significance and sacred nature of this rock to the Kaw people. Ignoring this fact, *I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe* was appropriated by the descendants of White settlers and, in 1929, was removed from its original location to Robinson Park and re-dedicated to "the pioneers of Kansas who in devotion to human freedom came into a wilderness, suffered hardships and faced danger and death to found this state in righteousness."

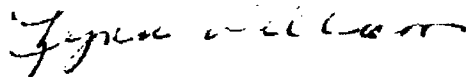
Our intent for the return of *I<sup>n</sup>'zhúje 'waxóbe* is to reclaim our role as its original stewards and to respectfully restore and renew its significance as a sacred item of prayer for our people. We have no intent to remove this item from Kansas, but to bring it to a new home at Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park in Council Grove. The park is owned and maintained by the Kaw Nation and is open to the public. Here, the rock will join other monuments of historical significance to the Kaw people and the citizens of Kansas. Our long-range goal is to develop and implement an interpretive plan for the site as an educational resource for all Kansans and visitors to learn about Kansas' original inhabitants, the Kanza.

With this letter, I designate James Pepper Henry (Kaw Nation Vice-Chairman), Pauline Sharp (Kaw Nation Citizen), and Curtis Kekahbah (Kaw Nation Citizen) as official representatives of the Kaw Nation

regarding this claim and its process. They form a committee that will work with all affected and interested parties. It is our wish to work collaboratively with you and your representatives in the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation to reach an amicable conclusion that is satisfactory to all parties. Upon mutual agreement, we welcome the participation of other entities in this process.

On behalf of the citizens of the Kaw Nation, I thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lynn Williams".

Lynn Williams,  
Chairwoman  
Kaw Nation

Cc: James Pepper Henry