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Office of the Chief

**Chuck Hoskin Jr.**  
*Principal Chief*

**Bryan Warner**  
*Deputy Principal Chief*

October 26, 2020

The Honorable Jim Inhofe  
United States Senate  
205 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin Hern  
United States House of Representatives  
1019 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Lankford  
United States Senate  
316 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin  
United States House of Representatives  
2421 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
United States House of Representatives  
2405 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
United States House of Representatives  
2207 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kendra Horn  
United States House of Representatives  
415 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Inhofe and Lankford and Representatives Hern, Mullin, Lucas, Cole, and Horn:

Last week you were presented with two visions for Oklahoma post-*McGirt*. The first, brought forward by Attorney General Hunter, is a pro-sovereignty solution, one that yields certainty and stability and empowers Tribes to choose their own path moving forward. The second, the “One Oklahoma” proposal, is, without question, a thinly veiled call for total disestablishment.

Attorney General Hunter’s compacting framework lays out a common-sense mechanism for resolving criminal jurisdiction issues that may arise in the months and years to come. It preserves the ability of any of the Five Tribes to proceed without any modification to criminal jurisdiction under *McGirt*. It also authorizes any of those tribes, should they choose to do so, to compact with the state on matters that are in the best interest of the individual Tribe and its communities within that Tribe’s reservation.

Significantly, the Attorney General's proposal only addresses criminal matters. There is no need for Congress to weigh in on civil and taxation matters—history shows that Tribes and the state can (and routinely do) resolve such matters to our mutual benefit. I urge you to keep the criminal and civil aspects separate, and refrain from tying one to the other.

The Hunter framework is consistent with my unwavering insistence that any *McGirt* response recognize and preserve Cherokee Nation's reservation and sovereignty for all time. I ask that you give this proposal the utmost consideration.

I further ask that you reject Gov. Stitt's disestablishment proposal. As you know, I remain an active participant in the *McGirt* conversations because I truly believe that we cannot sit back and simply pretend that Congress has no authority in this matter. To do so would be to hand our fate to others who would destroy our reservation.

The anti-sovereignty "One Oklahoma" disestablishment proposal seeks to do just that. Consider the paternalistic, anti-*Native* language used by the Commission in its report. "At stake is whether we will continue to be One Oklahoma, or whether we will see a step backward ..." "Today, the reality of life on large reservations in other states is clearly undesirable and features just the sort of conflict and separation Oklahoma was designed to avoid. Native Americans live in segregated areas often separated from the rest of society." People who have a positive view of Tribes do not use this type of language. One cannot say they respect sovereignty while also advocating that no role be left for tribal governments.

Gov. Stitt's proposal does not see any room for Tribes in Oklahoma's future. The Hunter plan is a positive step toward a safe and stable Oklahoma. To me, the choice is clear.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Hoskin Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chuck Hoskin Jr.  
Cherokee Nation Principal Chief