

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 19, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

I write today to request your assistance in seeking compensation for the town of Lac du Flambeau in response to a recent court ruling¹ regarding an ongoing dispute between the town and the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (“Tribe”).

As you know, on January 31, 2023, the tribal government began denying public passage on four tribally owned roads, going so far as to construct roadblocks. These blockades restricted the ability of several dozen town residents to leave their homes, created a dangerous situation that impeded access for emergency services, and made it more difficult for people to obtain basic necessities like groceries and prescription medications. The tribal government then sought a staggering \$20 million in damages from the town.

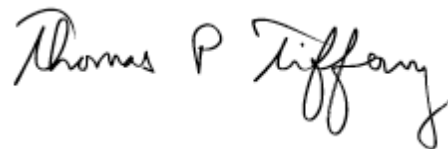
This was a life-threatening situation, and to restore public access, the town was forced to comply with this extortion racket by paying monthly installments to the tribal government in order to keep the roads open. The total sum handed over by the town in connection with the Tribe’s demands amounts to over \$600,000 – far more than the appraised value of the roads, which were assessed at approximately \$79,000.

Earlier this month, U.S. District Judge Conley ruled that the homeowners have a right to access these roads, which were listed on the National Tribal Transportation Inventory list at the time the illegal barricades went up. President Biden’s Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) subsequently removed the roads from the inventory in March 2023, an action that Judge Conley ruled was also a violation of the law.

I am asking the Department of Justice to investigate this matter and seek compensation from the tribal government to reimburse the town. Not only did the town hand over in excess of \$600,000 as part of this illegal shakedown, it also incurred significant legal expenses and administrative costs associated with responding to the actions of tribal leaders and the Biden administration’s BIA. The town of Lac du Flambeau – a small community with a population of just over 3,000 people – saw its finances pushed to the absolute limit by the unlawful standoff created by the reckless and irresponsible actions of the tribal government. It is only fair that as the instigators of this unnecessary dispute, the tribe be held accountable.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information that may be helpful.

Sincerely,



Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.wpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/order.pdf>