



Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

2929 3rd Avenue North, Suite 300, Billings, Montana 59101

Ph: (406) 252-2550

Website: www.rmtlc.org

September 3, 2024

Republican candidate for U.S. Senate

Tim Sheehy

P.O. Box 6456

Helena, Montana 59604

Dear Mr. Tim Sheehy:

We are writing to register our dismay and disappointment over your recorded remarks at your fundraiser on Nov. 6, 2023, which you boasted that roping and branding with members of the Crow Nation was “a great way to bond with the Indians while they’re drunk at 8:00 a.m.” As the recognized leadership assembly representing Montana’s Native American peoples, the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council was stunned when it heard and read your comments, especially noting that our people have been here for over 10,000 years. Your words and your repeated claims that you are a Montanan and not a carpetbagger who recently parachuted into our state seem to augment a developing narrative surrounding your candidacy that honesty is merely a shape shifting quality.

We have listened to you and have taken seriously your run for office, but we find your recorded remarks to be a betrayal of the good faith of Montana’s Native Americans. You come into our homes, and you ask for our votes and then you go to your fundraiser, ironically with alcohol flowing and laughter at our expense behind closed doors, and you insult us with a stereotype that only seeks to severely diminish and dishonor our people. Just as offensive, your language and double-dealing tone showed complete disregard for the individuals, families, medical professionals and organizations that toil endlessly to address issues of addiction in Montana for Native Americans and all our fellow citizens.

The Crow people are not your punchline. Native Americans are not your punchline. Your words were unnecessarily hurtful, and unfortunately a little too close to being hateful.

What is truly disappointing is how your remarks have tainted the good ground that Native and non-native Americans have sought to walk and share in Montana. It is surprising that you have not demonstrated any true actionable effort in continuing to walk forward on that path. If allowed to linger without meaningful action, your words will become an inexcusable set-back in trust-building and forward progress for all Montanans.



We strongly urge you to make a formal apology at a public news conference and air a corresponding public service announcement on broadcast tv in Montana with input by the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council as to its content. A buy of at least 200 gross rating points is required to ensure the PSA reaches an adequate audience to undo the damage caused by your remarks. You should know that native people enlist in the military at higher percentages than any segment of our society thus grace and the military code of justice article 107 and article 134 require no less than abject honesty and integrity from you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Bryce Kirk (Sep 3, 2024 13:22 MDT)

Bryce Kirk, Chairman
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council