

QUAPAW NATION

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STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN JOHN L. BERREY ON QUAPAW TRUST SETTLEMENT

To the Members of the Quapaw Nation:

This morning it was announced in the Court of Federal Claims in Washington, D.C., that the Quapaw trust litigation has been settled. This has been a goal of mine—and of our entire leadership team—for more than 17 years. I am very pleased to be able to tell you we finally achieved this result.

Ever since we became a nation within the United States, our people have often had extremely hard times and have been horribly mistreated. You know our history. When we were forcibly moved to our present reservation, there were only a few hundred Quapaw left. We started this litigation process knowing that no amount of money could make up for the injustices done to our people. But this settlement does represent meaningful restitution.

In 2003, early in this process, I recall speaking at a meeting at the Department of the Interior. I expressed that what we wanted was acknowledgment of how we have been mistreated and some compensation. I said we want to look forward—not backward. As I also told that group, Indian people want to stop burning the house down and instead rebuild.

I hope this settlement in some way helps settle accounts on part of our past. But our Nation is looking forward. Our stability and continued growth is an example in Indian country. Our governmental services are recognized for their quality—in realty, environmental regulation, public safety, agriculture, and others. Our enterprises—including our newest development, the Saracen Casino Resort—are providing more and more quality jobs for our people and our communities. Our Nation today is setting the standard. I am confident the best is yet to come for our people.

Today, I am happy to see this cause end successfully, and I am grateful to everyone who has worked in this long effort. But what is also on my mind are all the people we have lost who had a part in it, and who were supportive, and who wanted to see this result. This settlement honors them, and all of our ancestors who somehow kept this Nation alive in extremely hard times. We also honor them as we continue building the Quapaw Nation.

It has been my privilege to work for you on this project. To each of you, Gun-Ney-Gay.



John L. Berrey

Chairman, Quapaw Nation Business Committee