

# The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation

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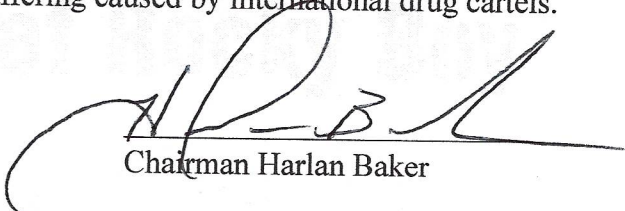
## STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN HARLAN BAKER ON BEHALF OF THE CHIPPEWA CREE TRIBE OF THE ROCKY BOY'S INDIAN RESERVATION

Two weeks ago, two members of the Chippewa Cree Tribe were shot and killed on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in North Central Montana by associates of international drug cartels. The senseless loss of these lives is a tragedy as well as a travesty of justice, but it was also not entirely unexpected. The forces of evil have been at work for several years, with drug cartels strategically preying on vulnerable tribal members and targeting Indian Country in remote areas, such as the Rocky Boy Reservation, where law enforcement is scarce. Drug cartels use tribal members and homes to flood Montana with fentanyl and methamphetamine, leaving death, addiction, and broken hearts and lives in their wake. The Tribe is desperately trying to deal with this complicated law enforcement issue with limited resources and limited help.

This is a reservation border security issue of utmost importance. The crisis is worsened by several factors, including unmet Rocky Boy law enforcement needs, inadequate tribal police training for drug and cartel investigations, inadequate funding and training of tribal prosecutors' offices, insufficient monitoring of drug cartel activities, insufficient resources to protect Indian Country and tribal peoples, decreased BIA law enforcement funding, and outdated tribal criminal codes to appropriately address drug cartel activity.

Montana's Indian Reservations are facing this epidemic unassisted. Our requests for help from the federal government have been ignored. Drug cartels have the advantage of unlimited resources from their evil drug trade, but we can't walk away from the problem. We must consider all available solutions, including cooperative tribal criminal jurisdiction agreements, reservation-wide checkpoints to search for drug dealers and gang/cartel members, and other community-based and local/state/federal strategies to thwart the continued infiltration by drug cartels onto reservations.

We are also at a crossroads where civil rights could be compromised. Many of the available solutions could come at the expense of individual civil rights, such as searches of known drug dealers, routine checks on homes with suspected drug activity, reservation bans, disenrollment of convicted drug dealers, reservation-wide sweeps of suspected drug dealers, police stops for out-of-state license plates. This risk requires a thoughtful and sensitive approach, or we will create additional challenges. The recent murders on the Rocky Boy Reservation are a symptom of a much larger disease. The time to act is now to collectively and decisively rid Indian Country of the evil scourge and tremendous suffering caused by international drug cartels.



Chairman Harlan Baker