## SUPREME COURT THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION SUPREME COURT FILED

CITIZENSHIP BOARD OF THE	MAR 1 5 2024
MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION,	) CONNIE DEARMAN W
Appellant,	) MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION ) COURT CLERK
	) Case No.: SC-2023-10
vs.	) (District Court Case No. CV-2020-34)
RHONDA K. GRAYSON and	) )
JEFFERY D. KENNEDY,	)
Respondents.	) )

MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE *AMICUS CURIAE* BRIEF BY JAMES D. DIAMOND, S.J.D., STEN JODDI, REPRESENTATIVE DEWEY MCCLAIN, JORDAN HARMON, AND AMY WARNE

The Citizenship Board of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation posits in its Brief that a "U.S. Solicitor of the Interior 1941 Opinion effectively approv[ed] the constitutional membership requirements" and impliedly abrogated Article II of the Treaty Between the United States and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, June 14, 1866, 14 Stat. 785, art. 2 ("Treaty"). However, at no time during the lower court proceedings, did the Citizenship Board cite to or rely on the 1941 Opinion—nor did the Board give any indication that it would blatantly risk the sovereignty of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation ("Nation") to perpetuate the "shameful taint of African slavery." *Cherokee Nation v. Nash*, 267 F.S upp. 3d 86, 89 (D.D.C. 2017).

Rather, the Citizenship Board, for the <u>first time</u> in its opening brief to this Court, urges this Court to adopt a theory of treaty abrogation that would gut the Nation's ability to protect its own sovereignty. In fact, the Board's proposed theory of treaty abrogation hands over the Nation's

treaty rights to an unelected federal government official who owes no obligation to the Nation or its citizens.

Supporters of tribal sovereignty across the country are gravely concerned about the position the Board has taken in this appeal. James D. Diamond; Sten Joddi; Representative Dewey McClain, State Representative for Georgia's 109th House District; Jordan Harmon, and Amy Warne ("Amici") respectfully request leave from this Court to file an amicus brief addressing the Citizenship Board's arguments regarding implicit abrogation of treaty rights via an opinion of the Solicitor of the Department of Interior.

Amici submit to this Court that because the Board did <u>not</u> make this argument below, Amici could not have known within "fifteen (15) days of the entry of the initial review decision accepting the appeal" that participation as amici might be necessary. See MCNA, 27, App. 2, R. 7. However, Rule 15 of this Court's rules allows a person "not a party to an action" to request permission by motion to file an amicus brief with this Court and does not suggest any temporal limit on when such request must be made. Id. R. 15. To ensure that the briefing cycle is not delayed, Amici advise the Court that their brief can be filed within ten days of permission being granted, leaving the Board ample time to respond.

For this Court's reference and as is required under the Court's rules, the interests of Amici are stated more specifically as follows. James D. Diamond, S.J.D., is the Interim Director of the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program and Professor of Practice at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law. He is a respected Indian Law Scholar and has taught at the National Tribal Trial College. Sten Joddi is an enrolled member of the Myskoke Nation of Oklahoma. He is an award-winning hip-hop artist and uses his platform to bring awareness to issues affecting indigenous communities. Representative Dewey McClain is an enrolled member

of the Cherokee Nation and is originally from Okmulgee, Oklahoma. He now serves as a State Representative for Georgia's 109th House District and is a leading advocate for tribal sovereignty

and treaty rights. Amy Warne is a citizen of the Mvskoke Nation, is Seminole, and Tiger Clan.

Ms. Warne resides on Kickapoo, Osage, Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita lands, known today as

Oklahoma City. She is a passionate advocate and an expert on the issue of Indigenous Food

Sovereignty and is a well-known advocate for Native women. Attorney Jordan Harmon is a

Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen residing in the Mvskoke reservation. Ms. Harmon received a

Juris Doctorate with a certificate in Native American Law from the University of Tulsa and began

her legal career as a Tribal attorney representing Tribal sovereign interests in Tribal, state, and

federal court. Joining the staff of Indigenous Environmental Network in June of 2022, she is now

a policy analyst and legislative advocate working to advance a national and international policy

agenda that is centered on strengthening Indigenous nation-to-nation building, Indigenous rights

and sovereignty, and Indigenous-based environmental justice.

Amici represent a diverse group of individuals who use their unique platforms across the

United States to advocate for tribal sovereignty and the rights of indigenous peoples. For the

reasons set forth herein, Amici respectfully request this Court grant leave to file a brief in the

above-styled and numbered cause to address the Board's proposed theory of treaty abrogation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jana L. Knott/ MCNBA #1320, OBA #30615

Bass Law

252 NW 70<sup>th</sup> St.

Oklahoma City, OK 73116

Telephone: (405) 262-4040

Facsimile: (405) 262-4058

jana@basslaw.net

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## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on the 15th day of March, 2024 a true and correct copy of the foregoing instrument was served via email and U.S. Mail to the following:

Graydon D. Luthey, Jr.
R. Trent Shores
Barrett L. Powers
GABLEGOTWALS
110 N. Elgin Ave., Ste. 200
Tulsa, OK 74120
dluthey@gablelaw.com
tshores@gablelaw.com
bpowers@gablelaw.com

Geri Wisner
Clinton A. Wilson
Jeremy Pittman
THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
P.O. Box 580
Okmulgee, OK 74447
gwisner@mcnag.com
cwilson@mcnag.com
ipittman@mcnag.com

Damario Solomon-Simmons, MCN # 354 Kymberli J.M. Heckenkemper, MCN # 1253 SOLOMONSIMMONSLAW, PLLC 601 S. Boulder Ave., Ste. 602 Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119 dss@solomonsimmons.com kheckenkemper@solomonsimmons.com

M. David Riggs, MCN # 1239 RIGGS, ABNEY, NEAL, TURPEN ORBISON & LEWIS, P.C. 502 West 6th Street Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119 driggs@riggsabney.com

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