



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

August 29, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

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## Re: Halt the Dakota Access Pipeline Easement to Drill Under Lake Oahe

Dear President Obama and Assistant Secretary Darcy:

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities, I am writing to express our concern over the Dakota Access Pipeline and its potential impact to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. NCAI respectfully requests that the Administration halt the Dakota Access Pipeline's easement to drill under Lake Oahe until the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's waters and sacred places are protected.

The Dakota Access Pipeline is another chapter in the long history of the federal government granting the construction of potentially hazardous projects near or through tribal lands, waters, and cultural places without including the tribe in the decision-making process. The Army Corps of Engineers approved several sections of the pipeline without fully satisfying the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Rivers and Harbors Act, and its federal trust responsibility to the Tribe, forcing the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe into a legal battle.

The current proposed route of the 1,168 mile long crude oil pipeline, which will transport nearly 570,000 barrels of oil each day from North Dakota to Illinois, crosses under Lake Oahe, just a half mile up from the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and could have irreparable harm to the Tribe's cultural, water, and natural resources. While the Tribe is waiting for a federal court decision on a preliminary injunction to stop the pipeline construction, the pipeline company is waiting for the Army Corps of Engineers to grant an easement to drill under Lake Oahe. The Administration must halt the issuance of an easement until the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe can have the opportunity to ensure the protection of its waters and sacred places.

If you have any questions, please contact Denise Desiderio, NCAI Policy Director, at [d-desiderio@ncai.org](mailto:d-desiderio@ncai.org) or Colby Duren, NCAI Staff Attorney & Legislative Counsel, at [cduren@ncai.org](mailto:cduren@ncai.org).

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Pata  
*Executive Director*