

TEMPLATE: Letter to Congress/White House Urging End to Shutdown

Dear [President/Senator/Representative Last Name],

I am a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, and I am writing to urge swift, bipartisan action to end the federal government shutdown.

The shutdown poses serious risks to Cherokee citizens and Tribal Nations across the country. It threatens programs that provide food, housing, education, and services that protect the health and wellbeing of Cherokee families and communities. These services are not discretionary; they are part of the United States' legal and moral obligations to Tribal Nations.

A prolonged shutdown disrupts agencies that administer or support these programs – including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (such as CDC and family services), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the U.S. Department of Education (ED), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) (including SNAP, WIC, and FDPIR), the U.S. Department of Labor (Job Corps), and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – causing delays, uncertainty, and staffing impacts that slow or halt services. It also undermines the broader economy of the Cherokee Nation by depressing household spending and straining small businesses across our communities.

Under our treaties and the federal trust responsibility, the United States government must ensure the continuity of essential services to Tribal Nations regardless of political disagreements in Washington. A shutdown undermines that duty and harms the very citizens those obligations are meant to protect.

I am also deeply concerned about the reductions in force (RIFs) and furloughs happening during the shutdown. These are not only unfair to hardworking public servants: they make it harder for the federal government to keep its promises. The people being furloughed or laid off are often the same individuals who help deliver food assistance, sustain public health programs, operate early learning and education services, and move housing aid forward. Weakening this workforce is both wrong and impractical. The federal government cannot meet its legal and moral responsibilities to Tribal Nations or to the citizens who depend on these essential services without these public servants.

I respectfully ask that you work with your colleagues to end the shutdown immediately and restore funding to agencies that serve Indian Country, ensuring that treaty and trust obligations to the Cherokee Nation are fully honored.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Wado,
[Your Name]

Citizen, Cherokee Nation
[City, State]