THE PAIUTE INDIAN TRIBE OF UTAH

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For Immediate Release

The Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah (Tribe) celebrates the U.S. Supreme Court ruling to uphold the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). This is a monumental victory for Tribes and Indian Country.

The ICWA was enacted in 1978 with provisions and the intent to safeguard the rights of Native American children, parents, and families. The intent of ICWA is to ensure our children stay connected to our families and our culture when a child is adopted or placed in foster care by providing preferences with extended family, other members of the Tribe, or other Native American families.

The impact of child removal was devastating to the Tribe. Like many other tribes, our people experienced the damaging consequences of forced assimilation policies, such as the boarding school era, the effects of the Mormon placement program, and other policies that forcefully separated children from their families, tribal communities, and stripped them of their Native identity.

Our first-hand experience with these devastating consequences motivated the Tribe to defend ICWA by supporting the Tribal Amicus Brief which fought tirelessly to defend ICWA. We commend all the Tribes who united to defend our constitutional rights, our inherent tribal sovereignty, and our sovereign rights to protect our children.

The ICWA is in the best interest of our children, our families, our communities, and supports the Tribe's self-determination in perpetuating our culture, traditions, and Southern Paiute heritage.

As the Tribe celebrates its 43rd Annual Restoration Pow-Wow this weekend, we also celebrate this massive victory for Indian Country. Aiy'yuk (Thank You)