January 20, 2021

**NNABA Statement of Support of Nomination of Congresswoman Deb Haaland**

The National Native American Bar Association unanimously joins a host of Native American Tribes and communities as well as countless political community leaders in applauding the nomination of Congresswoman Deb Haaland to the position of Secretary of the Department of the Interior. Congresswoman Haaland’s experience and record of working across the aisle to get things done are fierce. We are confident that she will continue to do the same as Secretary of the Interior and offer our support.

The Department of Interior oversees national parks and other public lands and resources, and its responsibilities include regulating oil and gas exploration on federal property. The department includes the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the Bureau of Trust Fund Administration. In a country as diverse as the United States the need for diversity and representation of Native Americans at the highest levels of government has often gone unnoticed and unrepresented. Congresswoman Haaland’s appointment will deliver refreshing perspective and insight to one of the highest levels in the federal government after centuries of invisibility. NNABA's goal of increasing the representation and presence of Native American's within the judiciary and legal profession supports the nomination of Native American's to all positions within all branches of the federal government. Native voices bring unique perspectives to vital discussions, and more often than not have a deeper understanding of the way federal initiatives impact Tribal citizens and Tribal governments. This is especially present within the Department of Interior which has been charged by federal law to handle many matters that affect Indian Country.

NNABA joins all Native American Nations in supporting the nomination and confirmation of Congresswoman Haaland to the office of Secretary of Interior and urges the Senate leaders to support this nomination and correct a long overdue and absent presence of a Native American voice to oversee the Department of Interior.