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February 22, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin, Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso, Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso:

The National Native American Bar Association is writing to express its enthusiastic support of Representative Deb Haaland to become the next Secretary of the Interior. We ask that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources also support this historic nomination at the upcoming Senate confirmation hearing.

An enrolled citizen of the Laguna Pueblo, Rep. Haaland would become the first Indigenous person to hold a Cabinet position. Rep. Haaland is uniquely qualified to assume this position. Since being elected to Congress in 2018 and re-elected in 2020, Rep. Haaland has demonstrated solid leadership and the ability to build meaningful relationships with members of the House and Senate on tough issues.

The National Native American Bar Association (NNABA) is an organization which seeks to advance justice for Native Americans and represent the interest of Native American attorneys in the legal profession. NNABA also recognizes that Native voices, and especially Native attorneys like Rep. Haaland, bring unique perspectives to vital discussions, and possess a deeper understanding of how federal initiatives affect Tribal citizens and Tribal governments. This is especially evident within the Department of the Interior which is charged by federal law to handle many matters that affect public lands, natural resources and Indian Country.

It is for these reasons that NNABA fully supports the nomination and confirmation of Rep. Deb Haaland to become the next Secretary of the Interior. NNABA respectfully urges the Senate leaders to confirm Rep. Deb Haaland who is singularly qualified to lead the Department of the Interior.

Sincerely,

*Thomasina Real Bird*

Thomasina Real Bird (*Ihanktonwan Oyate*)  
NNABA President