



The National Native American
Boarding School Healing Coalition



NATIVE AMERICAN
RIGHTS FUND

October 14, 2026

Ed Forst Acting Archivist of the United States U.S. National Archives and Records
Administration 700 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20408

Bradford Wilson Archivist of the United States Designate U.S. National Archives and Records
Administration 700 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Mr. Forst and Mr. Wilson,

On behalf of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS), Native Organizers Alliance, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), we write to express our strong opposition to the planned closures of the National Archives at Chicago and the National Archives at San Francisco, located in San Bruno, California, without meaningful Tribal consultation.

Of particular concern is the impact the closures of San Francisco and Chicago sites and the relocation of archival holdings will have on Tribal Nations, U.S. Indian boarding school survivors and descendants, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, Native researchers, and communities seeking access to federal records documenting their histories. Reports of the closures have proceeded without meaningful consultation with the Tribal Nations whose histories are represented within these collections. Decisions concerning the location, accessibility, and stewardship of federal Indian records should not be made without direct communication and meaningful consultation with affected Tribal Nations and Native communities.

The records held by these facilities are not simply historical resources; they document the federal government's relationships with Tribal Nations, Native families, and Native children across generations. Among these holdings are extensive materials within *Record Group 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs*, including records concerning federal Indian boarding schools, Indian agencies, enrollment, allotment, land, education, individual Indian money accounts, correspondence, censuses, and other aspects of federal Indian policy.

The work of NABS at the NARA locations has reinforced the essential role of accessing records in truth-telling, accountability, and healing for Tribes, communities, boarding school survivors and descendants attempting to understand what happened to relatives.

We urge the National Archives and Records Administration to reconsider the closures of the National Archives at Chicago and San Francisco/San Bruno, pause the relocation of permanent archival holdings, and work directly with Tribal Nations and affected communities to develop

solutions that preserve these irreplaceable records while maintaining meaningful regional access to them. The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, Native Organizers Alliance, National Congress of American Indians, and Native American Rights Fund stand ready to work with you.

Sincerely,

Nikki Santos, Chief Executive Officer
National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

Judith LeBlanc, Executive Director
Native Organizers Alliance

Larry Wright, Jr., Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians

John Echohawk, Executive Director
Native American Rights Fund

CC: Rep. Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee. Sen. Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee. Sen. Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee. Rep. James Comer, Chair, House Oversight Committee. Rep. Robert Garcia, Ranking Member, House Oversight Committee. Sen. Rand Paul, Chair, Senate Oversight Committee. Sen. Gary Peters, Ranking Member, Senate Oversight Committee