Insights: News Releases

Native American Practice Group, Legal Services & Government Relations

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Uniquely-Qualified Advocates. Nationally recognized, Kilpatrick Townsend's Native American Practice Group consists of enrolled members and descendants of federally-recognized tribes, former tribal in-house counsel, and former government officials and counsel, including the first Native American to serve as a U.S. Ambassador. Our team offers specialized legal and government relationship services throughout the country to help preserve, promote, and protect tribal sovereignty and other inherent tribal rights. Keenly aware of the unique legal status tribal nations enjoy, we build deep, lasting relationships with our clients when negotiating innovative solutions for often difficult and complex legal issues, involving:

- Tribal Sovereignty Protection
- Labor & Employment
- Land & Resources Protection
- Land Acquisition
- Water Rights
- Trust Enforcement
- Finance & Transactional Work
- Treaty & Statutory-Based Rights
- Intellectual Property
- Tribal Governance & Gaming

Further, we routinely provide policy advice and Congressional advocacy to help strengthen government-to-government
relationships, and have adjudicated and, when necessary, litigated tribal matters before local, state, and federal courts,including the Supreme Court.

Connected Thought Leaders. Always at the forefront, our attorneys serve on many Native American-related associations, councils, and committees; speak nationally on tribal-related topics; and have won a number of prestigious awards — including consecutive tier-one ratings by *Chambers USA* and *U.S. News - Best Lawyers*® in Native American Law — for their dedication to our clients and the protection of tribal sovereignty. Further, our Washington, D.C. office provides us with direct access to national policy makers and regulatory agencies, allowing us to quickly respond to emergent situations.

Precedent-Setting Experience. With the resources of a global law firm and the tailored approach of a boutique practice, our attorneys regularly collaborate across multiple practice areas and industries when handling complex, high-profiletribal matters. Our efforts have advanced the wellbeing of Native Americans, while periodically establishing new precedents and/or triggering headline news. Highlights include:

- Settled $3.4 billion class-action suit — the largest settlement against the U.S. government — for approximately 500,000 individual Indians for mismanagement of trust lands and assets (*Cobell v. Salazar*).
- Obtained permanent injunction barring state and local taxes on Indian land held in trust by the federal government against a county tax official.
- Protected federally reserved groundwater rights for a California tribe against two state water agencies, delivering a game-changing decision for Indian Country.
- Secured a permanent injunction against a natural gas company for trespass and an order to remove a natural gas pipeline across Indian lands in a landmark decision for Indian Country.
- Refinanced $310 million comprehensive casino debt, subsequently converting $105 million of the refinanced debt into tax-free debt using TED bonds to set new precedent in Indian Country and winning a NAFOA Deal of the Year Award.

"It's an honor and a privilege to serve Indian Country. We have deep respect for our clients and a strong belief in tribal self-determination. As such, we will never take a matter adverse to Indian Country."