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From: Sullivan, Thomas (ACF)

Sent: Sunday, July 08, 2012 11:54 PM

To: '[tmuhlhauser@nd.gov](mailto:tmuhlhauser@nd.gov)' <[tmuhlhauser@nd.gov](mailto:tmuhlhauser@nd.gov)>;

'[tim.purdon@usdoj.gov](mailto:tim.purdon@usdoj.gov)' <[tim.purdon@usdoj.gov](mailto:tim.purdon@usdoj.gov)>;

'[Sue.Settles@bia.gov](mailto:Sue.Settles@bia.gov)' <[Sue.Settles@bia.gov](mailto:Sue.Settles@bia.gov)>

Cc: Acting Assistant Secretary Sheldon (ACF); Jaacks, Melissa (ACF); Dawson, Diann (ACF); Samuels, Bryan (ACF); Sparks, Lillian (ACF)

Subject: Second Mandated Report of Child Abuse on the Spirit Lake Reservation

I am submitting this second report on child abuse on the Spirit Lake Reservation consistent with the guidelines established in the Attorney General's April 24, 2012 Decision Memo.

Events of the last 24 hours demand that I file this second report of child abuse on the Spirit Lake Reservation.

Ms. Muhlhauser you have not responded to my June 14, 2012 report, giving me the impression you believe all is fine on that Reservation, that there is nothing happening there that concerns you or the state of North Dakota. I trust that after you read this second report you might come to a different conclusion.

Earlier this evening I received word that a 2 month old baby girl of a drug-addicted mother died of neglect Saturday morning, July 7, 2012. While the family lives on the Reservation, they are not enrolled members of the tribe. For this reason the Director of Tribal Social Services ordered his staff to provide no services to that family or those children. When relatives sought help from Benson County Social Services, they were denied help because Benson County, I am told, will provide no services on the Reservation.

It seems Mr. Purdon that someone, maybe multiple someones has failed in their basic responsibilities, resulting in child endangerment in the extreme. I would hope that if an investigation determined who

placed this baby in such extreme danger that person would be charged with the crime of child endangerment.

Since this 2 month old has older siblings and since the mother is still drug addicted and likely to be still neglecting those children, who will assume responsibility to take action to protect those children from any further neglect? Ms. Muhlhauser and Ms. Settles, I trust you will work with your folks on the Reservation and in Benson County to make certain that those siblings of that dead baby are protected from any further neglect.

Finally, most of those quoted in the NY Times article today seemed to say that all was fine, that it was a minor problem that had already been almost completely resolved. How many more dead babies do we need to bury before we all begin to think more about the children who are suffering such unspeakable abuse and neglect than about our reputations?

The conditions on the ground on that Reservation place children at significant risk. Those who seek to downplay these conditions are endangering the health and safety of most, if not all, of the children living there.

Thomas F. Sullivan  
Regional Administrator, ACF, Denver