



Bois Forte

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

March 17, 2017

VIA EMAIL TO: LegalCounselRules@courts.state.mn.us

Michael Johnson, Senior Legal Counsel
State Court Administration
125H Minnesota Judicial Center
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Petition of Minnesota Tribal Court/State Court Forum to Amend Rule 10

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am writing on behalf of the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council to express its support of the petition to amend Rule 10 of the Minnesota General Rules of Practice for the District Courts. It is the belief of the Tribal Council and our tribal court judges that the present rule is outdated and fails to recognize the growth, development, and quality of tribal courts in Minnesota.

At Bois Forte, we have exercised criminal and civil jurisdiction since 1975. As a result, the judiciary of Bois Forte is recognized as an unbiased, fair, and trustworthy forum for the administration of justice. And in our isolated rural area, the demand for access to justice within the reservation and in the surrounding communities increases each year.

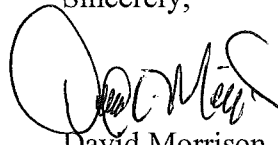
We understand that in 2002 and 2003 revisions to Rule 10 were made to provide a mechanism for recognition of tribal court orders, but because the Rule (as then revised) provides a great deal of deference to state court judges, tribal court litigants often suffer as a result of delays in the recognition process. When there are delays that affect the lives of litigants, they often perceive that state court judges are distrustful of tribal courts or that tribal courts are somehow inferior. That is not true, and revisiting Rule 10 as proposed in the Petition would address those concerns.

Bois Forte has committed substantial resources to its judicial system and is constantly seeking ways – large and small – to improve it. Our judges are all excellent, law-trained persons who have accomplished careers and are dedicated to excellence in our courts. It is expected that

at least one of our judges will testify at the March 31, 2017, hearing on the Petition to Amend Rule 10.

Thank you for considering our views and making this letter part of the record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Morrison, Sr.", written in a cursive style.

David Morrison, Sr.
Secretary-Treasurer