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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Kaw Nation is a federally recognized Indian Tribe and the original inhabitants of what is now known as the State of Kansas. In fact, the State of Kansas derives its name from the Kaw (Kansa) Nation. The State of Kansas was built upon the displacement and eventual forced removal of the Kansa people, and many in State Leadership are not aware of or choose to ignore these facts and the historical legacy of the Kansa in Kansas.

The Kaw Nation has become aware of a legislative effort to pass title to the Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site near Fairway, Kansas to the present-day “Shawnee Tribe,” one of three successors to the historic Shawnee Tribe (the others are the Eastern Shawnee Tribe and the Absentee Shawnee Tribe). The lack of understanding by the State of Kansas about the history of its lands is demonstrated by the lack of communication throughout this legislative effort to notify the Kaw Nation about these efforts.

The “Shawnee Indian Mission” is located on the aboriginal and treaty lands of the Kaw. These Kaw lands, as memorialized in the Treaty with the Kansa of June 3, 1825, were recognized as Kaw territory well before the Shawnee people were temporarily relocated to the present-day State of Kansas in the mid- Nineteenth Century, prior to their removal to present-day Oklahoma. The lands which the Shawnee people temporarily occupied were lands stolen from the Kaw people.

The Kaw Nation opposes any legislative effort related to conveyance of the “Shawnee Indian Mission” lands to any tribal entity other than the Kaw Nation. The Kaw Nation, as the representative of the original inhabitants of those lands, takes the position that if land originally inhabited by the Kaw Nation is to be conveyed to any tribal government, the Kaw Nation should have the right of first refusal to receive those lands. To be clear, the Kaw Nation supports restoration of the “Shawnee Indian Mission” and shares the belief that improvements are needed to tell a complete and accurate history, including the perspectives of the Native Americans affected by the mission (which extend beyond the Shawnee people). The Kaw Nation welcomes cooperation with the Shawnee Tribe and the other impacted tribes in this endeavor. However, the Kaw Nation opposes any action without consultation with the Kaw Nation, and outright opposes any conveyance of the property to any government or entity other than the Kaw Nation.

The Kaw Nation believes this matter has created an opportunity to strengthen dialog and communication between the Kaw Nation and the State of Kansas. The Kaw Nation invites leaders of the State of Kansas to work with the leaders of the Kaw Nation to build a cooperative relationship, so that we can have a correct account of our intertwined history, but also build a future that better serves our communities and citizens.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT KAW NATION VICE CHAIR JAMES PEPPER HENRY VIA
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