

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | June 15, 2022

NDHP and Spirit Lake Tribe Sign Mutual Aid Agreement

NARRATIVE: On Tuesday, June 14, 2022, a mutual aid agreement was signed between the Spirit Lake Tribe and the North Dakota Highway Patrol. This agreement will enhance law enforcement in the areas of emergency calls, requests for mutual aid and other law enforcement functions on the Spirit Lake Reservation. The agreement does not expand arrest authority. It does provide a legal means for officers to intervene during certain situations regardless of tribal status until local law enforcement is available.

Prior to signing the agreement, Governor Doug Burgum, Spirit Lake Tribal Chairman Douglas Yankton, and NDHP Superintendent Colonel Brandon Solberg offered comments and gratitude to everyone involved in bringing the historic agreement to fruition.

Governor Burgum referenced passage of HB 1234 during the 2019 Legislative Session and HB 1126 during the 2021 session that laid the groundwork as well as the mutual aid agreement signed with MHA Nation and the NDHP last October. He stated, "In an emergency, allowing the closest available peace officer to respond to a call for service could mean the difference between life and death. This agreement with Spirit Lake Nation prioritizes the safety of our citizens regardless of where they live or whether they are an enrolled tribal member." He went on to say, "We are deeply grateful to Chairman Doug Yankton, the Spirit Lake Tribal Council and the North Dakota Highway Patrol for their collaboration on this agreement, which cuts red tape and continues to strengthen our state-tribal relationships built on understanding and mutual respect."

Spirit Lake Tribal Chairman Douglas Yankton offered comments noting that the mere presence of law enforcement hinders criminal behavior, to include drug trafficking and human trafficking, which are serious problems on the state's five tribal reservations and throughout the state.

Colonel Solberg further commented that the mutual aid agreement will curb criminal behavior as well as bolster safety for all citizens of the state.

The agreement was signed during the Strengthening Government to Government Partnerships and Relationships Conference, hosted by the ND Indian Affairs Commission in Bismarck June 13-14.

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Governor Doug Burgum



Spirit Lake Tribal Chairman Douglas Yankton



Colonel Brandon Solberg



The agreement was signed by Spirit Lake Tribal Chairman Douglas Yankton, Governor Doug Burgum, and Colonel Brandon Solberg. Members of the Spirit Lake Tribal Council and North Dakota Highway Patrol also pictured. The agreement takes effect immediately; a copy of the agreement is attached for reference.

Group Photo: ND Governor's Office

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