

Wisconsin Conservation Voices: Ho-Chunk members gather to discuss the Wisconsin Supreme Court's impact on Indian Country

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MILWAUKEE, WI – Ho-Chunk tribal members came together tonight for a community dinner to discuss the direct impacts of the Wisconsin Supreme Court election on Native communities. The nonpartisan event is hosted by [Wisconsin Native Vote](#) (a program of Wisconsin Conservation Voices), the [Native American Rights Fund](#) (NARF), and the [Ho-Chunk Nation](#).

The upcoming Wisconsin Supreme Court election could affect laws that protect Native people against discrimination, access to the ballot, family law disputes, and many more issues that are critical in tribal communities. Tribal leaders and Native attorneys spoke to participants during the dinner to educate them about the role of the court and the importance of voting on April 4.

The speakers reiterated that the voices of Native people matter. Milwaukee is home to the largest concentration of Native people in the state, with a diverse population from tribes around Wisconsin and the country.

NARF Staff Attorney Allison Neswood (Diné), said this during her presentation:

“In a system that has a long history of racism and bias, the people who sit on the court matter. For instance, state judges make decisions that impact ongoing discrimination in the criminal justice system and Native Americans are incarcerated at among the highest rates in Wisconsin. The decisions the state Supreme Court

justices make are deeply personal to Native people.”

Anne Egan-Waukau (Menominee), Urban Native Vote Organizer of Wisconsin Native Vote said:

“Our people face structural barriers to voting and were only given the right to vote in 1924 from the Indian Citizenship Act. The Wisconsin Supreme Court rules on cases involving voting laws, voting maps, and more. I was once told I wasn’t allowed to vote, so I know it is important that we vote on April 4. We must vote for our people and for our ancestors who gave us the right to vote.”

A second event will be held at the Red Cliff Legendary Waters Casino on March 7 at 5 p.m. This event will be hosted by Wisconsin Native Vote, NARF, and the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to engage the Red Cliff, Bad River, and other northern tribal communities.

This is a nonpartisan event and none of the involved organizations or speakers support or oppose candidates.