

# WisDems: ICYMI: Pam Bondi joins Tom Tiffany in investigating Ojibwe over road dispute

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*“Spreading misinformation about our tribe is consistent with Representative Tiffany’s partisan agenda and serves only as a distraction that accomplishes nothing, which echoes his legislative track record over the past six years.” — Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe President John Johnson*

**MADISON, Wis.** — [New reporting](#) from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel details how GOP candidate for governor Tom Tiffany is attempting to use the federal government to bully and degrade Native Americans in order to use their land. Tiffany is purposely spreading misinformation about the Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe Nation and dismissing their sovereignty, going so far as to accuse them of “extortion.”

**[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#): Pam Bondi joins Tom Tiffany in investigating Ojibwe over road dispute**

By: Frank Vaisvilas

*U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi last week agreed to work with a conservative Wisconsin lawmaker looking into forcing the Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe Nation to pay back money it received because of a road access dispute with a town located entirely within its reservation.*

*Republican U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany, whose district includes much of northern Wisconsin and who is currently campaigning to be Wisconsin’s next governor, had requested Bondi’s Department of Justice work with his office in investigating the tribe. The non-tribal town of Lac du Flambeau is located within the Lac du Flambeau*

reservation.

Tiffany made his plea to Bondi directly during a [House Judicial Committee hearing](#) on Capitol Hill, Feb. 11. The hearing was mostly about the Epstein files.

The effort drew swift condemnation from the tribe.

In early 2023, tribal authorities barricaded four roads on tribal lands that provided access to dozens of non-tribally owned properties within the reservation boundaries. **Tribal authorities argued the roads had been illegally built on reservation land decades earlier and tribal requests to renew the leases on them had been ignored for at least 10 years.**

Tribal authorities reopened the roads after town officials agreed to pay the tribe an increasing monthly fee to do so until the matter was permanently resolved. Town officials eventually stopped paying the fee and tribal officials threatened, but ultimately backed away, from barricading the roads again in early 2025.

Then last summer a federal judge ruled that the roads must remain open. To many non-tribal homeowners, that solved the issue.

Tiffany explained to Bondi at the hearing that the closure of the roads in 2023 caused homeowners, including senior citizens, to have to use snowmobiles to access their properties and heightened concerns about access for emergency services.

He said the tribal officials ultimately collected about \$600,000 from the town to keep the roads open and referred to the tribe as perpetrators.

"I would call it extortion," Tiffany said.

Bondi said Tiffany is doing a great job in representing the district and said her office is familiar with the situation. She said her office is more than willing to work with Tiffany in trying to recoup the \$600,000 that Tiffany said nearly bankrupted the town.

**"Representative Tiffany's statement are false and inflammatory," said Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe President John Johnson in a Feb. 13 statement. "The facts and the law are clear: The town trespasses on tribal trust land and for years refused to correct the problem. To mislead the public by calling**

***the tribe 'perpetrators' is not only irresponsible, it is a direct attack on our sovereignty, our treaty rights and our reputation as a sovereign government."***

*Tribal officials said the temporary access permits arranged for the town to keep the roads open were voluntary and lawful and not extortion. They stated at no time were homeowners "trapped" or denied emergency services.*

***"Spreading misinformation about our tribe is consistent with Representative Tiffany's partisan agenda and serves only as a distraction that accomplishes nothing, which echoes his legislative track record over the past six years," Johnson said. "We strongly encourage Representative Tiffany to use his platform to address issues that truly impact Indian Country ... He spends little time on issues that deeply impact rural Wisconsin and is instead pursuing his own political ambitions."***