

## ***Letter to President Joe Biden In Support of Clemency for Leonard Peltier***

*Led by Indigenous Members of the Entertainment & Fashion Industries:*

*Dallas Goldtooth | Jana Schmieding | Bird Runningwater*

*Sierra Teller Ornelas | D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai | Bethany Yellowtail*

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Dear President Biden:

We write to you today in support of Leonard Peltier's petition for executive clemency and urge you to expeditiously commute the remainder of his sentence. We are Indigenous and Indigenous-allied members of the entertainment and fashion industries using our platform to bring your attention to the urgency of Mr. Peltier's petition.

Leonard Peltier is a 78-year-old enrolled citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (ND). He has been imprisoned for 47 years, making him the longest-serving political prisoner in the United States. Nothing is more emblematic of the mistreatment of American Indians and the uneven hand of the criminal justice system than the handling of his case by the federal government. Leonard Peltier has galvanized generations of Indigenous activists and grassroots movements, yet he remains in confinement. But Leonard is not only a symbol of Indigenous pride, he is also our relative. And his homecoming is imperative to our collective healing. Represented in this letter is a legion of Indigenous artists, forming one collective voice, asking yet another President to grant Leonard Peltier his freedom.

Mr. Peltier is elderly and in failing health and we fear he will not ever make it back to his homelands at Turtle Mountain. We also fear you will miss the opportunity to free a man whose continued incarceration represents to Native America the worst of a federal law enforcement system who for decades carried out acts of racism and injustice throughout Indian Country.

Leonard Peltier is serving a sentence for aiding and abetting in a case where his co-defendants were found not guilty on self-defense grounds. For this, he is serving a longer sentence than most principals in murder convictions.

Further, Mr. Peltier's conviction has been widely recognized as the result of a flawed prosecution that included blatant constitutional violations, prosecutorial misconduct, and a juror's early-trial admission of racism against Native Americans. Underscoring this, James Reynolds, the United States Attorney whose office handled the prosecution and appeal of the case, wrote to you on July 9, 2021, in support of clemency for Mr. Peltier, critically admitting his own office's prosecutorial errors and conceding they were unable to prove that Mr. Peltier personally committed any offense on the Pine Ridge Reservation that day.

Mr. Reynolds' letter, referring to all of these factors, included the following statement: "Leonard Peltier's conviction and continued incarceration is a testament to a time and a system of justice that no longer has a place in our society."

Our letter joins those from national and international human rights organizations, leading voices on criminal justice issues, religious leaders, dignitaries from around the world, and numerous current and former members of Congress. Notably, in 1993, Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI), then the Chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, endorsed clemency for Mr. Peltier and stated, "*As long as the FBI misconduct issues in this case are left unresolved, it will be difficult for Native Americans to trust that the U.S. judicial system will accord them with the same justice it accords to other citizens.*"

Remarkably, twenty-nine years later, in January of 2022, the current Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) also wrote to you urging the commutation of Mr. Peltier's sentence saying, "*I strongly support your administration's work to pursue a fair and constitutionally sound justice system. In keeping with those principles, I urge you to commute Mr. Peltier's sentence.*"

This is now about justice and an opportunity, with your grant of clemency, to recognize the *injustices* that have taken place in our tribal communities. We urge you to grant clemency to Leonard Peltier by commuting the remainder of his sentence. Thank you for your consideration of our urgent request.

*Signatories:*

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|---|------------------------|
| 1. <b>Dallas Goldtooth - Letter Lead</b>      | 16. Shaz Bennett       |
| 2. <b>Bird Runningwater - Letter Lead</b>     | 17. Lucas Brown Eyes   |
| 3. <b>Jana Schmieding - Letter Lead</b>       | 18. Jeremy Charles     |
| 4. <b>Sierra Teller Ornelas - Letter Lead</b> | 19. Chad Charlie       |
| 5. <b>D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai - Letter Lead</b>  | 20. Tazbah Chavez      |
| 6. <b>Bethany Yellowtail - Letter Lead</b>    | 21. Joey Clift         |
| 7. Jodi Archambault                           | 22. Azie Dungey        |
| 8. Doane Avery                                | 23. Kelsey Duvauchelle |
| 9. Brian Bahe                                 | 24. Siena East         |
| 10. Shauna Baker                              | 25. Sarah Eagle Heart  |
| 11. Twyla Baker                               | 26. Crystal Echo Hawk  |
| 12. Tanaya Beatty                             | 27. Chris Eyre         |
| 13. Nanobah Becker                            | 28. Anthony Florez     |
| 14. Daryl Begay                               | 29. Norma Flying Horse |
| 15. Tiffany Benally                           | 30. Charley Flyte      |

31. *Sydney Freeland*
32. *Nicholas Galanin*
33. *Julia Gavin*
34. *Cara Gee*
35. *Lily Gladstone*
36. *Kiowa Gordon*
37. *Jason Grasl*
38. *Michael Greyeyes*
39. *Aurora Guerrero*
40. *Nicole Harjo*
41. *Joy Haskell*
42. *Allison Hicks*
43. *Kaniehtiio Horn*
44. *Taietsarón:sere Leclair*
45. *Zahn McClarnon*
46. *Tatanka Means*
47. *Dr. Jessica Moore Harjo*
48. *Blake Pickens*
49. *Tommy Pico*
50. *Kenny Ramos*
51. *Darrell Redleaf-Fielder*
52. *Angela Riley*
53. *Emma Robbins*
54. *Sebastian Robertson*
55. *Althea Sam*
56. *Moi Santos*
57. *Shania Skyy*
58. *Vera Starbard*
59. *Kholan Studi*
60. *Brooke Swaney*
61. *Marilyn Thomas*
62. *Ruth-Ann Thorn*
63. *Stacey Thunder*
64. *Dana Tiger*
65. *Mark Tilsen*
66. *Raoul Max Trujillo*
67. *Dash Turner*
68. *Edgar Villanueva*
69. *Loren Waters*
70. *Daniel Warrior*
71. *Bobby Wilson*
72. *Jared Yazzie*
73. *Allie Redhorse Young*
74. *Roman Zaragoza*
75. *Gregory Zaragoza*
76. *Karim Ahmad*
77. *Amy Aniobi*
78. *Rosanna Arquette*
79. *Katie Arthurs*
80. *Deidre Backs*
81. *Stephanie Beatriz*
82. *Elizabeth Bell*
83. *Leah Benavides*
84. *Tawnya Benavides-Bhattacharya*
85. *Tsipi Ben-Haim*
86. *Jonathan Berry*
87. *Donnie Betts*
88. *Brigid Boyle*
89. *Guy Branum*
90. *Patrick Brice*
91. *Jackson Browne*
92. *Kristin Burke*
93. *Corrie Caster*
94. *Jeff Chang*
95. *Linda Yvette Chavez*
96. *Bruce Cockburn*
97. *Adam Conover*
98. *Peter Coyote*
99. *Lauren Craniotes*
100. *Grace Critchfield*
101. *L.C. Crowley*
102. *Lisa E Davis*
103. *John Densmore*
104. *Chelsea Devantez*
105. *Ani DiFranco*
106. *Kate DiRienzo*
107. *Steve Earle*
108. *Katherina Nahid Ebrahimi*
109. *Camille Eden*
110. *Daniel Erliz*

111. *Gabriel Estrada*
112. *Michael Falbo*
113. *Diane Farr*
114. *America Ferrera*
115. *Nick Forster*
116. *Melissa Fumero*
117. *John Fusco*
118. *Peter Gabriel*
119. *Joel Garcia*
120. *Daisey Gardner*
121. *Wayne Garner*
122. *Amelie Gillette*
123. *Rupinder Gill*
124. *Danis Goulet*
125. *Jonathan Groff*
126. *Lisa Hanawalt*
127. *Emily Heller*
128. *Marielle Heller*
129. *Ed Helms*
130. *Kahara Hodges*
131. *Karen Horne*
132. *Eric Ibarra*
133. *Jessica Jazayeri*
134. *Barry Jenkins*
135. *Christina Jimenez*
136. *Samuel Johns*
137. *Burrell Jones*
138. *Gloria Kellett*
139. *Riley Keough*
140. *Elena Klaver*
141. *Kenneth Klonsky*
142. *Kris Kristofferson*
143. *Larry Laboe*
144. *Lorna Lefoux*
145. *Jesse Leigh*
146. *Gabe Leidman*
147. *Christopher Locklear*
148. *Justin Louiz*
149. *Marcos Luevanos*
150. *Alexandria Martin*
151. *Kelley Mcgregor*
152. *Rose McIver*
153. *M'Daya Meliani*
154. *Elizabeth Méndez Berry*
155. *Kyle Michael Mendiola*
156. *Charles Micheaux*
157. *Ryan Miguel*
158. *Dustin Milligan*
159. *Aaron Mirmalek*
160. *Michael Moore*
161. *Solange Morales*
162. *Tom Morello*
163. *Matthew Murray*
164. *Nalita Murray*
165. *Graham Nash*
166. *Zoe Neugebohr*
167. *Evangeline Ordaz*
168. *Anshantia Oso*
169. *Gil Ozeri*
170. *Carolina Paiz*
171. *Adam Parker*
172. *Eric Parmater*
173. *Illana Peña*
174. *Carmen Perez-Jordan*
175. *Jarrid Poitras*
176. *Penny Prentice*
177. *Heather Rae*
178. *Bonnie Raitt*
179. *Vanessa Ramos*
180. *Preston Randolph*
181. *Dailyn Rodriguez*
182. *Gladys Rodriguez*
183. *Shannon Rivers*
184. *Calixto Robles*
185. *Oliverio Rodriguez*
186. *Robby Romero*
187. *Pacita Rudder*
188. *Mark Ruffalo*
189. *Amber Ruffin*
190. *Morgan Sackett*

191. *Chitra Sampath*  
192. *Tekanya Sanchez*  
193. *Nico Santos*  
194. *Tanya Saracho*  
195. *Debra Scacco*  
196. *Claire Scanlon*  
197. *Michael Schur*  
198. *Heath Seifert*  
199. *Haley Seppa*  
200. *Nina Shaw*  
201. *Chloe Simpson*  
202. *Mary Sinclair*  
203. *Lauren Smith*

204. *Andy Spahn*  
205. *Ringo Starr*  
206. *Shelby Stone*  
207. *Lynette Taylor*  
208. *Paul F. Tompkins*  
209. *Andrew Troy*  
210. *Tanya Tucker*  
211. *Steven Van Zandt*  
212. *Lindsey Villareal*  
213. *Andrew Williamson*  
214. *Casey Wilson*  
215. *Hilary Winston*  
216. *Deborah Wolfe*

“It poorly serves the cause of justice to allow such a thoroughly discredited conviction to stand and to cause further pain and suffering for Mr. Peltier.” - Coretta Scott King (2000).