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February 9, 2010

The Honorable Kenneth Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
U. S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Cape Wind/Wampanoag dispute

Dear Secretary Salazar,

I am writing to provide a bit of reality to the fiction that has been presented by representatives of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) in their opposition to the proposed wind turbines in Nantucket Sound. As prelude to my remarks it is important for you to know that my father (Luther Madison) and his father before him (Napoleon Madison) both served for the duration of their lives as Medicine Man of the Aquinnah Tribe. I am a former member of the Tribal Council of the Aquinnah Tribe. And I played an important role in the Tribe's effort to attain federal recognition back in 1987, having been chairman of the Gay Head Board of Selectmen for fifteen years. I was born and raised in Gay Head (Aquinnah) and live there today.

I am employed by the law firm of Wynn & Wynn, P.C. and that firm has been retained by Cape Wind. However my employer has not influenced my decision to write this letter in any manner whatsoever. I do support efforts to wean America's dependence on imported fuel and while this project is relatively small, I believe operation of Cape Wind's energy turbines in Nantucket Sound is a step in the right direction and should be approved.

That being said, I am stating to you with complete honesty and knowledge that I never participated in, witnessed, or even heard of a sacred spot on the horizon that is relevant to any Aquinnah Wampanoag culture, history or ceremony. Nor did I see, or hear, either my father or grandfather conduct such ceremony. I do know that offerings to the Creator are made at "first light," but first light is a *period of time* not a place. The notion that locating wind turbines in Nantucket Sound will impose on, impact or harm any cultural tradition is just plain false. I believe it to be a fabrication, invented by a small number of Tribal members, who happen to be involved in Tribal government and who happen to be opponents of Cape Wind who wish to derail the project. I do not believe that they understand that creating ceremony to achieve political objectives undermines the credibility of our legitimate cultural values and our people as a whole.

This past Saturday I attended a meeting of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribal Council in an attempt to engage Tribal leaders in a discussion on this matter. I was informed by

Chairman Maltais that the Council voted to oppose Cape Wind in 2004. Council votes on matters such as this by resolution; copies of which are kept in the Tribal archive. Search of tribal records revealed a vote was indeed taken among 7 Council members in attendance at a meeting held on July 21, 2004. The vote was 3 in favor with 4 members abstaining. The vote to oppose Cape Wind failed. I know of no other record of in the Tribal archives concerning Cape Wind.

I have attached to this letter a petition signed by members of our Tribe. Among those signing is Beverly Wright, former Chairperson of the Tribe (interestingly, she, as Chairperson at the time, made the aforementioned motion to oppose the project, but now is in support). I removed the name of one signer at his request, as he felt his signature may influence others who may be asked to sign, not because he is opposed to the project, or because he agrees with Tribal officials' stated reasons for opposing the project.

Mr. Secretary, your decision on whether to allow construction of the wind turbines in Nantucket Sound should rest in scientific analysis and environmental impact. However, it would be wrong to allow your decision to be influenced by fabricated cosmology.

I thank you for including consideration of tribal interests in the Cape Wind approval process. As a Native American I know that cultural sensitivity all too often takes a back seat to industrial development. However statements made by Aquinnah Wampanoag officials purporting that the proposed facilities, in their proposed location, will adversely affect Wampanoag tribal rituals, ceremony or tradition are completely without foundation.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey L. Madison