



## LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE

*Carri Jones, Tribal Chair*

*Arthur "Archie" LaRose, Secretary-Treasurer*

*Penny DeVault, District I Representative*

*Steve White, District II Representative*

*LeRoy Staples Fairbanks III, District III Representative*

October 29, 2015

Dear Honorable Paul Anderson, Representative Diane Loeffler, Senator David Senjem and members of the Art Subcommittee of the Minnesota State Capitol Preservation Committee:

The renovation of our Minnesota State Capitol building offers us an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reassess existing art and the story it tells about who we are as a people. The current works of art displayed offer a narrow and inaccurate representation of our State's historically diverse population. Importantly, some pieces of art misrepresent our history and puts Native Americans in an offensive and inaccurate light, such as the Governor's Reception Room painting of Father Hennepin "discovering" St. Anthony Falls.

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe urges your consideration to:

1. **Remove offensive, traumatizing paintings from the Capitol**, including: *The Discoverers and Civilizers Led to the Source of the Mississippi*; *Father Hennepin Discovering the Falls of St. Anthony*; *The Signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux*; and *The Battle of Killdeer Mountain*.
2. **Find a new home for the Capitol art that is removed**, where it can be remembered and interpreted.
3. **Better interpret the Capitol's remaining historic art**, preferably with interactive touch screens.
4. **Provide more in-depth training for Capitol tour guides** on the art's history and meaning.
5. **Add new Capitol art** that reflects and honors Minnesota's current ethnic and cultural diversity. Leech Lake would be happy to assist your subcommittee on locating Indigenous American artists or artwork, if requested.

Our Minnesota State Capitol art needs to show that all people are welcome and have a place at the Capitol's decision-making table. We believe this history needs to be remembered, but the Capitol is the wrong place for this art. It sends the wrong message. This art needs to be moved to a museum where it can be better interpreted.

**On behalf of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe with its nearly 10,000 Band members, I urge the Arts Subcommittee and the Preservation Committee to remove the offensive art, and add inspiring art.**

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please do not hesitate to contact myself or our Government Relations Specialist Angela Nordman at (218) 335-8246.

Sincerely,

Carri Jones  
Tribal Chair  
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe