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Title:	Honoring and congratulating Deb Haaland on the occasion of her becoming the 54th United States Secretary of the Interior and the first Native American woman to lead a cabinet-level department, particularly one that is existential for Native tribes and people.				
Sponsors:	Councilmember Green, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Squilla, Councilmember Parker, Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Quiñones Sánchez, Councilmember Brooks, Councilmember Gilmore Richardson, Councilmember Gym, Councilmember Domb				
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4/8/2021	0	CITY COUNCIL	ADOPTED		
3/25/2021	0	CITY COUNCIL	Introduced and Ordered Placed On Next Week's Final Passage Calendar		

Honoring and congratulating Deb Haaland on the occasion of her becoming the 54th United States Secretary of the Interior and the first Native American woman to lead a cabinet-level department, particularly one that is existential for Native tribes and people.

WHEREAS, Debra Anne Haaland is an enrolled member of the Laguna Pueblo, an indigenous American tribe who have lived in what is now New Mexico since the 1200s, cementing her claim as a “35th generation New Mexican,” and, as of her swearing in as the 54th Secretary of Interior on March 18th of this year, became the first Native American woman to be confirmed by the Senate to lead a cabinet-level agency; and

WHEREAS, Born in Arizona in 1960, Secretary Haaland is the daughter of a military family - she and her four siblings accompanied her mother, Mary Toya, also of the Laguna Pueblo, who served in the Navy, and her father, Major John David "Dutch" Haaland, a decorated officer in the Marine Corps, to postings around the country before settling in Albuquerque to be near her family, in time for Deb to graduate from high school there; and

WHEREAS, Secretary Haaland then worked in a local bakery before, at the age of 28, enrolling in the University of New Mexico, from which she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1994; and

WHEREAS, Four days after graduating, Secretary Haaland gave birth to her daughter, Somáh, for whom she would provide as a single mother by starting a salsa company, although she sometimes did not earn enough money to afford housing, relying on friends for shelter, and on food stamps for sustenance; and

WHEREAS, Secretary Haaland is over thirty-years sober and public about her alcohol addiction, having expressed thanks for the love and support of her family and community to overcome “that terrible time in [her] life,” which has grounded her concern about the addiction on a personal as well as national level; and

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WHEREAS, By 2006, Secretary Haaland had earned her Juris Doctor in Indian law from the University of New Mexico School of Law, shortly before becoming the first chairwoman elected to the Laguna Development Corporation Board of Directors, a Laguna-owned business created to strengthen the Laguna Community and its economy, where she oversaw business operations for the second largest tribal gaming enterprise in the state and successfully advocated for the corporation to create policies and commitments to earth-friendly business practices; and

WHEREAS, Secretary Haaland transitioned into electoral politics, serving as the 2012 Obama Native American vote director, the 2014 Democratic lieutenant governor nominee, then being elected to a two-year term as chair of the New Mexico Democratic Party from 2015 to 2017, where she raised enough money to pay off seven years' worth of debt incurred under previous chairs and from which she would set the stage for her party to sweep every statewide and federal office on the ballot the following year, including her own successful campaign for New Mexico's First Congressional district, which covers much of Albuquerque, the Sandia Pueblo, and her own Pueblo of Laguna; and

WHEREAS, Together with Sharice Davids of Kansas, a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation, and dressed in traditional Pueblo dress, necklace, and moccasins, Ms. Haaland would be sworn in as dual-first Native American women to serve in the United States House of Representatives by Speaker Nancy Pelosi in January 2019; and

WHEREAS, On March 7, 2019, during a debate on voting rights and campaign finance, then-Representative Haaland became the first Native American woman to preside over the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Despite her past and more recent partisan roles - such as serving as co-chair for Senator Elizabeth Warren's 2020 presidential campaign - as well as having the political positions of a self-declared "proud progressive," such as supporting cannabis legalization and a ban on fracking, Secretary Haaland has cultivated relationships across parties, states, and identities, including co-chairing the House Native American Caucus with Representative Tom Cole of Oklahoma, a member of the Chickasaw Nation, and serving as chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands within the House Committee on Natural Resources alongside ranking member Representative Don Young of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Those relationships coupled with support throughout Native American communities, such as a letter from Chief William Harris of the Catawba Indian Nation to South Carolina Senator Lindsay Graham and the indigenous enthusiasm in Senator Lisa Murkowski's Alaska, whose support had helped propel her own re-election, only the second successful write-in campaign for U.S. senator in history, helped elevate Haaland to nomination by President Joseph Biden, then confirmation by the U.S. Senate to become the 54th Secretary of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior ("DOI") includes the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Geological Survey, the National Park Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs ("BIA"), and has responsibility for managing 507 million acres of surface land (about one-fifth of the land in the United States), 476 dams and 348 reservoirs through the Bureau of Reclamation, 410 national parks, monuments, seashore sites, and more through the National Park Service, and 544 national wildlife refuges through the Fish and Wildlife Service, and while some domestic concerns the department originally dealt with have gradually transferred, particularly to the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency, land and natural resource management, Native American affairs, wildlife conservation, and territorial affairs remain the responsibilities of the Department of the Interior; and

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WHEREAS, The current mission of DOI is to conserve and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provide scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honor the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper; and

WHEREAS, For most of the time since its founding in 1849, however, DOI has been a locus of exploitation of natural resources, deprivation of Native tribes, regulatory capture by extractive industries, and imperial impulses toward land and people alike, with the desecration of the Black Hills Mountains of the Lakota Sioux being paradigmatic, but also including the no-bid lease of Naval petroleum reserves at Teapot Dome in the 1920s and the decades-long conflict between collection of mining royalties and oversight of safety by the Minerals Management Service that culminated in the failure of the Deep Water Horizon project in 2010, to name but a few instances of many; and

WHEREAS, The First Congress of the United States placed relations with Native American under the auspices of the Department of War, which would lead to the establishment of the BIA in 1824 by white supremacist and exponent of nullification John C. Calhoun, then Secretary of War, a reflection of the national policy of hostility and warfare against indigenous, tribal people, even when it was not more openly genocidal, which would persist through the BIA's transfer to DOI; and

WHEREAS, The BIA would oversee or participate in the shifting regimes imposed by the national government toward tribal Americans, like the long-failed promises of citizenship, first made by President Washington, and the repudiation of treaties by every generation; the short-lived fur "factory system" to supply American military needs and the long-lasting efforts to assimilate or "civilize" the members of the tribes; the coerced displacement of tribes and people from their homes, ancestral and otherwise, and the formal removal from definitively ancestral homes of even the Five Tribes - sometimes called "Civilized" - the Cherokee, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), Chickasaw, and Seminole that had adopted many practices of the imperial settlers, such as Christianity, literacy, and plantation slavery, through the forced march known as the Trail of Tears; the dissolution of tribal governments and of communal lands, by the dispersion of communal lands to "competent" individual members of tribes, and otherwise made available for homesteading by white settlers; the restoration of land and mineral rights, which included uranium and related polluting resources, coincident with post-World War II industrial needs; the propagation of the Native American boarding, or "Indian Residential," school system, to which children were forcibly separated from their families, and made to abandon their Native American identities, languages, and cultures, the last such school not closing until 1973; the creation of the Indian Adoption Project to promote adoption of Native children from sixteen western states by white adoptive families in the East from 1958 to 1967; or a sordid host of other oppressive policies created almost entirely without regard to the wishes of or input from the affected tribes or their members, and then nearly always from partially assimilated men; and

WHEREAS, This history of political and cultural subjugation, material and collective expropriation have left deep scars with the more than half of Native people living off the reservations (mostly in American cities) and in Indian Country, such as disproportionate incidence of substance abuse and diabetes, homelessness and joblessness, workplace discrimination, ancient languages on the verge of extinction and historical injustices systematized into modern daily realities; and

WHEREAS, These compounding problems, in addition to epidemic rates of sexual assault and domestic violence, with thousands going missing or being murdered each year, are felt most acutely by American Indian and Alaska Native women, who are healers, warriors, protectors, lawmakers, leaders, and artists making invaluable contributions to tribal nations - as life givers, culture bearers, caretakers of Native peoples, and

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advocates for their interests within their families, tribes, states, and our country; and

WHEREAS, In the face of imperialism, disease, war, oppression, genocide, and disempowerment, tribal members and communities remain strong, and have reaffirmed their intrinsic claims to America, with everything from military service - the “Code Talkers” being a high-profile example - to the founding of Native universities and law schools, the American Indian Movement against systemic poverty and police brutality, and the campaigns against corporate use of racial and problematic names, logos, and images, among many others; and

WHEREAS, To have a Native person, but particularly a Native American woman like Deb Haaland, one personally and intimately familiar with the interlocking crises and multi-generational strength of American tribes, the individual dangers and endurance of tribal members, running DOI in its entirety offers the opportunity to repudiate absolutely America’s history of imposing choices about tribal sovereignty for the ends of white citizens without direction from the original residents of this land, the possibility to rectify the injustices that have been committed against them, and to pay homage to Native Americans' perseverance and collective successes, of which this is the merely one prominent recent example; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor and congratulate Deb Haaland, on the occasion of her becoming the 54th United States Secretary of the Interior and the first Native American woman to lead a cabinet-level department, particularly one that is existential for Native tribes and people.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Secretary Haaland as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

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