



KIOWA TRIBE

P.O. Box 369 • Carnegie, Oklahoma • 73015
Phone: (580) 654-6338 • Fax: (580) 654-1788
OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATURE

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UPDATE ON RECENT LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY HEARINGS
AND A RESPONSE FROM THE LEGISLATURE
TO CHAIRMAN SPOTTEDBIRD'S NOVEMBER 1 WEEKLY ADDRESS

Our Tribe is at a flashpoint.

On Saturday, November 1, 2025, Tribe Chairman Lawrence Spottedbird published a livestream address to Cauigu citizens on the Kiowa Tribe Facebook page. Approximately nine minutes of the 22-minute run time was devoted to the subject of several inquiry hearings conducted by the Legislature from Tuesday, October 28, 2025, to Thursday, October 30. In his remarks, the Chairman propagated a number of misleading characterizations about the hearings in question. Tribe Members deserve facts, not emotionally reactive commentary.

In his social media posting, Chairman Spottedbird stated of the hearing process:

“I have never felt so disrespected by anybody in all my life ... I just never felt so disrespected from our legislators, all of'em, all seven of 'em ... It's just terrible. And this was all kind of led by our youngest legislator, Cole DeLaune ... He was elected into that position about a year or so ago and has only had one agenda: ... bring negative spirit to the Legislature. And they've fell into that ... We really need to pray for them to really see what they're doing. It's no good ... the core value of Cauigu is 'respect our elders,' and I'm all their elders. But I'm also the leader of the Cauigu. I'm elected ... They even brought up Facebook posts ... I ask to just stick with the facts ... It's only a focused agenda that they're following, not really concerned about the needs of our Kiowa people. It's really appalling ... We don't have a budget. That's adding more stress to concerns of running our Tribe ... Seven legislators totally disrespect me for no reason except they decided that's what they're going to do because ... they don't want us to grow ... Satan is terrible. He always fights us when we're trying to do good ...”

Fundamentally, Chairman Spottedbird's statements suggest hostility at the premise that he should have to answer questions about his use of Tribe monies. That should alarm each and every Kiowa citizen. As Chairman, Mr. Spottedbird is constitutionally tasked with implementing and following Tribe law, and he bears responsibility for applications of Tribe funds during his tenure. Acknowledgement of this reality may be inconvenient, but it respects the right of Cauigu families to expect transparency and accountability from their government.

Since this most recent spring, the Legislature has released series of public statements to update Tribe Members regarding the unresponsiveness of the Executive Branch about certain topical areas related to Tribe finances during the process of constructing the Annual Budget; the ensuing issuance of subpoenas to four Executive Branch officials over the course of the summer; and the calendaring, formatting, and regulatory architecture developed for the inquiry hearings. Those updates were published on April 1, May 25, July 13, July 17, and October 10. They are still accessible on the Tribe's legislative website (<https://www.kiowatribe.org/legislative>) as well as the Kiowa Tribe Legislature Facebook page located at the following hyperlink: (<https://www.facebook.com/share/1Cd2FtUEf3/?mibextid=wwXIfr>). These updates reflect the Legislature's commitment to proactively ensuring that the Cauigu people are empowered with as much information about their Tribe government as possible.

As previously noted, the hearings began on October 28. Richard McMahon, the present Chairman of the Kiowa Casino Operations Authority Board of Directors, appeared before the Legislature on same day. Chairman Spottedbird testified on October 29. Marland Toyekoyah, Kiowa Tribal Administrator and William Weaver, Tribe Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, testified on October 30. All votes by the Legislature encompassing the service of subpoenas to these Tribe officials as well as the scheduling and Rules of the proceedings passed **unanimously**. A key duty of the Legislature outlined in the Kiowa Constitution monitoring "the actions of the government," and it takes that mandate seriously. In his November 1 monologue, Chairman Spottedbird overlooks the checks-and-balances structure of our quadrilateral government: the role of legislators is to amplify the voice of our people, not to merely operate as a rubber stamp for the Executive Branch.

Over the course of the hearings, questioning was led in rotation by myself, District 7 Legislator Warren Queton, District 4 Legislator Cole Kickingbird DeLaune, and District 5 Legislator Tiya Tanequodle Rosario. Although we were united as a legislative body in pursuing transparency for you, the Cauigu people, anyone familiar with our population understands that independence of thought will be a chief characteristic of any group of seven Kiowas. **At no time were concerns about disrespect raised in the course of the three-day proceedings because, quite simply, no disrespect occurred.** As Speaker, it is incumbent upon me to maintain courteousness and cordiality during legislative interactions with other branches of Tribe government, and I discharge that obligation with the utmost solemnity. As public leaders, legislators, the Chairman, and Vice-Chairman alike are all subject to tough questions as well as scrutiny and critique, especially when it comes to Tribe money that belongs to you. **That standard is the hallmark of a healthy democracy: no one is above Tribe law, and no one is above question.**

Ultimately, Members of the Tribe can make their own determination about whether the efforts by the Chairman (echoed by Mr. McMahon in his own social media

commentary) to portray the line of questioning at the hearings as a form of victimization are accurate. Each day was open to the public and streamed on Zoom. The Legislature will compile a comprehensive report of its findings and, pending technological organization of approximately twenty hours of footage, release recordings of all hearings in the upcoming days. Many of the documents referenced at each proceeding are presently accessible via external Dropbox link (<https://iaelaw.box.com/s/4qk2pbgl31qiyb6gfd0f7i8pxgdudv1z>) on the webpage of the Legislature at www.kiowatribe.org/legislative.

In the meantime, the Legislature is taking up Chairman Spottedbird's request "to just stick with the facts." Kiowa citizens may be interested in the following data points pertaining to the Chairman's mismanagement of Tribe dollars that were uncovered by the Legislature during the hearings:

- Chairman Spottedbird conceded that he had lost almost \$500,000 of Tribe monies in the failed Indian City Screen Printing endeavor managed by his one-time brother-in-law. He did not dispute documentation reflecting that this "business" generated a mere \$10,699 in revenue and only ever sold orders in an isolated two- to three-month period despite being subsidized by Tribe funds for approximately a year and a half. The Chairman could not substantively explain why over \$70,000 in T-shirts remained unused upon the closure of the operation or why that stock has sat collecting dust for the past two years. Despite this, the Chairman further indicated in his testimony that he would have spent even more Tribe monies on Indian City Screen Printing had the Legislature not prevented him from doing so. Even more troublingly, Chairman Spottedbird testified that a business plan for the enterprise had never been completed.
- When he was queried about the General Ledger for Indian City Screen Printing, he confirmed that he had paid \$50,000 through the fund housing the Screen Printing business for an entirely separate LLC: a "Native Brands of Oklahoma" owned by Tribe Member Theodore Nuncio. In reviewing a letter dated to June 2023, the Chairman verified that five \$10,000 disbursements had been made from Tribe monies to Mr. Nuncio between July and October of that same year. Despite attempts by Chairman Spottedbird to characterize this expenditure as a loan or investment, there was never commitment by Mr. Nuncio to give anything of value to the Tribe. Chairman Spottedbird testified that the company in question is still not operational over two years later and that no agreement was ever reached regarding repayment of the funds or a precise percentage of ownership in the company by the Tribe in exchange for them. When asked exactly how the Tribe's resources had been applied given the multi-year failure to launch, the Chairman suggested that Mr. Nuncio had been living off of the money and defended the possibility that a sole Tribe citizen had received

such a disproportionate payout by asserting that it was his decision as Chairman to make such an outlay.

- Chairman Spottedbird stated, “I stand by my Attorney General,” when asked about his reaction to the use of bigoted and homophobic slurs by same Attorney General to refer to the members of the Legislature. The AG in question is an Executive Branch official who serves at the pleasure of the Chairman and is not Kiowa. To the working knowledge of the Legislature, he is not Indigenous. Cauigu can ask themselves if the Chairman’s support for open discrimination against his own fellow Kiowas by an appointee under his purview is consistent with our cultural values.
- Amid questions about Facebook posts authored by a former employee of the Finance Department of the Tribe that raised alarms regarding the misuse of a Tribe credit card by the Chairman and his spouse, Chairman Spottedbird testified that his wife had charged a purchase at Costco on same credit card. The following day, Mr. Weaver stated that a Tribe credit card had existed in the Chairman’s individual name for approximately the first nine months of Mr. Weaver’s stint as Chief Financial Officer from December 2023 to August or September 2024. Mr. Weaver further testified that the former Finance staffer who had blown the whistle via social media had also voiced concerns that she had never received receipts to reconcile purchases made on the Tribe card issued to the Chairman.
- The Chairman confirmed the veracity of an April 2025 letter authored by AG Homburg to the National Indian Gaming Commission regarding the recoupment of more \$320,000 (in overpayments identified by Chairman Spottedbird himself in March 2024) issued to KCOA Chairman McMahon and four former Trustees of the KCOA Board. In same correspondence, Mr. Homburg documents that he is acting at the Chairman’s directive and has “the authority to speak on behalf” of him before writing, “I have no issue of dispute towards any of your stated facts ... I agree to resume the course of action agreed to between the Tribe and the NIGC and attempt to collect the overpaid stipend funds from each Board Member (Dunlop [sic], Kennedye, McMahon, Poe and Yeahquo) against whom recovery was previously sought. In this regard, the Chairman and I will immediately resume communication with each Commissioner along with the KCOA and KGC to resume attempt to recover the overpayments received by each member previously noted ...” Half a year later, Mr. McMahon testified that Chairman Spottedbird has not done what he said to a federal agency that he would do “immediately.” Furthermore, Mr. McMahon testified that he would continue refusing to pay back any of the monies received outside the scope of Tribe law unless compelled to do so by court order.

The Chairman outright contends that the Legislature “is not really concerned about the needs of our Kiowa people,” and characterizes its posture as “really appalling.”

However, just this past Friday, October 31, the Legislature voted to pass The Emergency Response Fund Act of 2025, legislation that structures immediate short-term relief through \$300 payments for Tribe citizens amid the current U.S. government shutdown, SNAP interruptions, and broader economic stressors. The Chairman has been well aware of the Legislature's movement to develop a strategy for marshaling rapid aid to Members of the Tribe. That legislation now awaits the Chairman's signature. Concerned citizens may encourage him to sign the Act by emailing him at lspottedbird@kiowatribe.org or by calling his Tribe cell phone at (580) 919-9825. A failure by the Chairman to sign this critical measure is what would be truly "appalling."

Similarly, any reasonable person will recognize that the Chairman's stewardship of Tribe finances does not foreground "the needs of our Kiowa people." **The \$448,294.10 lost by Indian City Screen Printing totals more than the entire allocation of Emergency Assistance in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. A de facto \$50,000 gift to a lone Tribe Member with no payback terms or return on investment while many citizens incur denials for Emergency Assistance even amid economic emergencies defies comprehension. The more than \$300,000 that the Chairman refuses to recover from Mr. McMahon and the former KCOA Trustees (despite his own Attorney General calling them "overpayments") adds up to more than the Back-to-School Assistance customarily distributed by the tribe each year. The choice to back an official who has lobbed intolerant prejudiced insults at the members of the Kiowa Legislature is inconsistent with the central need of the people: honor and dignity.**

And while we do not have the Annual Budget for which the Chairman asked (with raises scaled between 8% and 17% for a select few employees), he should know that funding line items are identical to last fiscal year consistent with the procedural components delineated in the Constitution.

The Legislature will never back down from its fight to ensure that our government is answerable to **you**. We will share additional updates as new developments arise.

In service to and solidarity with our citizens,



Michael Primus
Speaker of the Legislature
The Kiowa Tribe Legislature