

# *United Tribes of Michigan*

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*Frank Ettawageshik, Executive Director*

## **RESOLUTION # 041 10-14-2015**

### **United Tribes of Michigan calls for Renaming Fort Custer Training Center**

**WHEREAS**, the membership of United Tribes of Michigan (UTM) is open to all of the twelve federally recognized tribes located in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the organization provides a forum for the Tribes in Michigan to address issues of common concern and is committed to join forces to advance, protect, preserve and enhance the mutual interests, treaty rights, sovereignty, and cultural way of life of the sovereign Indian Tribes of Michigan throughout the next seven generations; and

**WHEREAS**, UTM accepts the mission to engage, as a matter of mutual concern, issues that impact the health, security, safety, and general welfare of Native Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties, Michigan are home to the Fort Custer Training Center, which is owned by the United States government and operated by the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fort Custer Training Center (originally known as "Camp Custer") was established in 1917 for military training during World War I and named after General George Armstrong Custer, whose reputation and history as an officer in the United States Army's 7<sup>th</sup> Calvary can best be described as controversial and checkered;

**WHEREAS**, General Custer is also known to have targeted Indian women and children, who were captured to be used as "human shields" in furtherance of his unit's campaign's against Native American tribes in the West, a tactic that is universally condemned and is now used by terrorist groups such as the ISIS;

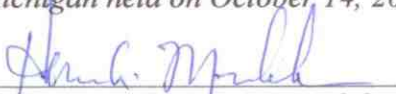
**WHEREAS**, the United Tribes of Michigan understands that the United States Department of Defense defers to the decision of the service branch or agency having administrative control over military installations concerning matters such as the re-

naming of those installations.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that despite General Custer's roots in the State of Michigan, it is the opinion of the United Tribes of Michigan that George Custer's known military tactics and dubious accomplishments are undeserving of honor and the military training center should be re-named.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the United Tribes of Michigan formally requests that the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the United States Defense Department remove the name of George Custer from the military training center and recreational lands located in Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties and rename that facility in consultation with interested parties, including Indian tribal governments in the State of Michigan.

*Adopted by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining, at a meeting of the United Tribes of Michigan held on October 14, 2015.*

  
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Chairman Homer A. Mandoka  
UTM President