**Administration for
Children & Families**

90 7th Street, Ninth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

**www.acf.hhs.gov**

 June 27, 2012

Dear Tribal Chairperson:

The purpose of this letter is to request your continued support for the work of the Tribal Child Care Association of California (TCCAC) and the State-Tribes Collaboration Workgroup.

Tribal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) grantees began meeting with the State of California CCDF grantee, the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) in 2007, and formed the TCCAC in 2009. Since then, it has become a strong voice for Tribal child care programs in California. The TCCAC and the State-Tribes Workgroup have ensured that the early education and child development needs of Tribal children and families are thoughtfully considered when policy and program decisions are being made at the State level. The TCCAC has educated State legislators about the role of child care in supporting and enhancing Tribal communities, and has sought and supported participatory research opportunities. The TCCAC has kept Tribal concerns and the need for respectful engagement at the top of its agenda.

However, Tribal child care programs were not meaningfully included in the development of California’s application for the Federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant or the subsequent development of a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Partly as a result of not being included in the State’s QRIS, Tribal child care administrators voiced their interest in developing a Tribally-focused QRIS. Tribal child care administrators indicated that this was one way to affirm Tribal sovereignty and regulatory legitimacy with the State and other grant-making entities. Accordingly, Tribal child care administrators have met to develop standards, a monitoring system, and a QRIS that can be taken back to each Tribal government for approval and a formal resolution. To ensure that the QRIS takes into account the diversity of Tribal child care programs in California, the Region IX Office of Child Care would like to include to the extent practicable, each Tribe.

Involvement in the TCCAC and the State-Tribes Workgroup meets the CCDF requirements to coordinate the delivery of CCDF-funded child care services with other Tribal, Federal, State, and local child care, early childhood development programs, and is an appropriate use of CCDF quality dollars. It provides opportunities to collaborate with other Tribal governments, to ensure accurate child counts, to identify overlapping service areas (as federally required), and to coordinate child care services and construct a training agenda that meets the diverse needs of Tribal child care programs. Your support in assuring your Tribe’s attendance and participation at these meetings is essential to the success of this group.

We look forward to working together to strengthen early education and child care and development programs to meet the needs of Tribal children and families. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or your assigned Child Care Program Specialist, Kim Relph at (415) 437-8485 or Kurt Gee at (415) 437-8443. Thank you for your time and consideration.

 Sincerely,

 Robert E. Garcia

 Robert E. Garcia

 Regional Program Manager

 Office of Child Care, Region IX

cc: Tribal CCDF Administrator