



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAIHC Names Gary Cooper as Chairman

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Washington, DC (June 12, 2018) – At its 43rd Annual Convention during the annual meeting of its Voting Members, the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) elected Mr. Gary Cooper as its Chairman. Prior to being elected, Mr. Cooper served on the NAIHC Board of Directors as Vice Chairman, and was Legislative Committee Chair. He noted, “I truly appreciate our members’ support in selecting me as the new Chairman, and look forward to working with all of you over the next two years to ensure NAIHC is meeting the needs of our tribal housing programs.” Mr. Cooper succeeds Sami Jo Difuntorum, Housing Executive Director of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians of Oregon, who served as NAIHC’s chairwoman for four years.



Gary J. Cooper is Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation. He has worked for Cherokee Nation in Indian housing since 1999. Prior to being named Executive Director at the housing authority, he served as Executive Director of Cherokee Nation Housing Services.

He has been instrumental in the revitalization of the Housing Authority as a means of constructing new homes for Cherokee families. Mr. Cooper is an enrolled member and citizen of the Cherokee Nation.

As a small child living in rural Northeast Oklahoma, Mr. Cooper himself experienced the positive impact of housing. His parents and two younger sisters were greatly appreciative to have been able to participate in what was then the New Mutual Help Program. Indian housing, through the HACN and Cherokee Nation, has played a major role throughout all of Cooper’s life. “I don’t know where I would be today if it wasn’t for the hand-up, not hand-outs, that Cherokee Nation has assisted not just my family but others with over the years” said Cooper. “My service to the HACN and the Cherokee people is my way of showing my gratefulness and gratitude for that. I am proud to be a part of an organization that has been providing housing opportunities in Indian country for the past 50 years.” Cooper is also a graduate of Bacone College, which originally began as a Cherokee Baptist Mission in Indian Territory in 1880.

About NAIHC: for over 43 years, NAIHC has supported and served housing organizations, housing professionals, and Tribal housing leaders in Indian country. NAIHC fights for Tribal self-determination and improving housing conditions for its Voting members which include tribal housing authorities, tribal housing departments, and Tribally-Designated Housing Entities. It achieves this through legislative advocacy, training & technical assistance, and membership support. For more information, go to its website at naihc.net.

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