

Oranna B. Felter
Lead Plaintiff, Felter V. Norton
Mixed Blood Uinta Band of
Ute Indians of Utah
P.O. Box 465
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The Honorable, Orrin G. Hatch, (R-Utah)
104 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: HAWAIIAN NATIVE GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2005, S. 147

Dear Senator Hatch,

I am the lead Plaintiff in Felter V. Norton. I urge that you strongly support the Hawaiian Native Government Reorganization Act of 2005, S. 147. Reaffirmation of the Native Hawaiian right to self-determination will rectify a long-standing injustice and is long overdue. I also want to see them gain something that we were cheated out of in 1954.

We were terminated by an Act of Congress in 1954 and have been trying to get Congress's attention to our plight and to get a bill proposed to restore our Federally Recognized Indian Status, and Return our Lands, Waters, Gas, Oil and Minerals along with our Identity that was stolen without due process. (Public Law 671, 83 Congress more commonly known as "The Ute Partition Act."

There are 490 Original Members in our Uinta Band. Out of 490 at the time of Our Termination approx. 260 were "Minor Children" with "No Vote or Voice" in their Termination. I was one of the Minor Children that because of the Termination Act was forced into a tragic situation over which I had absolutely no control.

We have been trying for many years to do away with the Ute Partition Act, that terminated me and my Uinta People, which has caused so much pain, suffering, death, sickness and complete genocide, to a once proud group of American Indians.

Many of us have kept our Uinta Pride and kept on fighting against the powerful who want to silence our voices. Most of my people have lost almost everything they ever owned to shrewd and unscrupulous businessmen, because we didn't know how to function in the Whiteman's' world, after having Bureau of Indian Affairs as our Guardians.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs left us alone and defenseless while others stood by and allowed the destruction of my people and me. Sadly, our Grandfathers, Grandmothers, Mothers, Fathers, Uncles, and Aunts could only stand by while our identities as Uinta's was taken away and our valuable lands and oil, gas and minerals were allowed to go into the hands Non Indians.

When we were terminated each original 490 was to receive 10 shares of Stock. These Stocks were suppose to represent an interest in the rich, oil, gas and mineral reserves here on the Ute Reservation, and was suppose to help us with a continuing income to be able to survive in the "New World" as "Terminated Indians."

Because of the Governments experiment called "Termination", me and my Uinta people could not survive as my people knew nothing about existing in the "new world" and the Minor Children were helpless because they were too young to know what was happening to them. Without the protection of the so called guardian federal

government, most of my people sold their Ute Distribution Corporation Stock Shares or traded them for groceries, gas, tires, junk cars, medical and dental bills, hospital bills etc.

They had to sell them to just survive and try to take care of their families. The Non Members who purchased the Ute Distribution Stock Shares now receive the payments that we should be receiving except for the BIA's failure in protect us, their "Wards." This fact has been kept hidden from the general public because disclosure will prove that the BIA failed to execute the Ute Partition Act in the worst way.

Now "Non Uinta Members and None Indians benefit from a "State Chartered Corporation, "The Ute Distribution Corporation," which handles the gas, oil and mineral incomes of the Uinta Mixed Blood Ute Indians of Utah.

Further, lands were supposed to have been reserved for the Minor Children. However the appointed trustee's of their accounts sold outright their grazing permits for \$1,000.00 and then the federal government said our lands were gone.

Our precious "Water" was suppose to be reserved, but now, we are still fighting for our water.

Our Hunting and Fishing rights had to go to court in the 80's where it was decided that the Original 490 Mixed Bloods could hunt and fish with the rest of the Ute Indian Tribe. We had been deprived of our most sacred hunting and fishing rights from the time of termination, until the case was won, something that we should have had all along. But no one looked out for our interests.

The rest of our Tribe, The Ute Indian Tribe was to follow us and be terminated in ten years after us. This never happened!! We are the only Tribe in the United States and possibly the world that only one fourth of a tribe was terminated and have had to live by a Law Created by Congress for a whole Tribe.

Most of us have been raised as "Uinta Indians" and we go to Sun Dances, Ceremonies, Pow Wows, Sweats, etc. but we didn't know the first thing about surviving in a Whiteman's' world when termination came knocking at our door. We never voluntarily voted to become "terminated Indians." This is also kept from Congress and the general public. We always had the help of the Government and relied on that help to be given us in an honorable manner.

Many of our Members have served in the United States Military defending this Great Nation, the very Nation that has turned their backs on them for fifty (50) plus years.

Our people have needlessly died and many have lost their will to live because of being placed in a cage by termination and the Bureau of Indian Affairs threw away the key to let them out.

We have had to live with racial discrimination of the worst kind, slander etc. from both Non Indians and Non Terminated Tribal Members. The Non Members say "Your Indian" while the Non Terminated Tribal Members say "Your White." We've had to survive in "two different worlds". One white and one Indian, and believe me it hasn't been easy especially when other took what the U.S. Congress intended us to live on.

A lot of my people have passed on because they could not accept being made to live like white people. They were totally unprepared for termination and the Bureau of Indian Affairs knew this but let it happen.

Out of seven in my family alone, just my younger brother and me are alive, and I am 60 years old and he is 56. I was 11 when we were terminated and he was 7. My little sister was 3 and died of Kidney Failure when she was nine, because we had no Medical Services.

My Mother had to sell her lands and everything she had to pay medical bills because they said we no longer qualified for Indian Health Services. My Mom and Dad divorced, and My Dad who served in World War 11 and was Cherokee and Choctaw, went back to his home State of Oklahoma and later where he drank continually and later died of injuries suffered in a car accident. Our forced termination by the U.S. Congress amounted to nothing but racial and cultural extermination that we condemn other Countries for doing to their own people.

My Mother, once a proud leader of the "Uintah Band," sat on the Mixed Blood board, and part owner of a little store in Ft. Duchesne, Utah turned into a "stumbling fallen down alcoholic" all due to the BIA's abandonment and the fact that they had no one to turn to in their most helpless hour of need. The Store in Fort Duchesne, Utah still stands with a reminder of my Mother and Fathers name painted on the roof - "LIZ & SAM'S". You can see it just as you turn to go to Fort Duchesne.

She could not live, because the people she had fought against questioning the termination had finally broken her spirit to live. She died in a car wreck in 1963 with a broken piece of brown beer bottle stuck in the top of her head. Dead at the age of 45. She was dead along time before the accident; termination "took her heart, spirit, and her will to live. Now some Non Indian holds her shares and doesn't even care about the pain and agony they caused to our Uinta People.

My Mother "Elizabeth Curry Bumgarner" should have been alive to see her grandchildren.

My Older Brother who had served in the United States Marines in the 50's died at the age of 35.

"He drank himself to Death." The list goes on and on. The evil of Termination lives among us right now and in your Congressional District.

The "Termination and Genocide" of my people is one of the worst examples of what the United States Government done to the First Americans, "The American Indians, Mixed Blood Uinta Band of Ute Indians of Utah." Our problems are real.

Because of what has happened to us and our people in the State of Utah, I am asking that you will support our Hawaiian Brothers and Sisters and vote for passage of the above titled act. Please vote in favor of the Akaka Bill (S 147) and set the Native Hawaiians on the path to self-determination and economic self-sufficiency. We want them to gain a status in our United States that was stolen from us by the rich and powerful.

Respectfully,

Oranna B. Felter, Lead Plaintiff, Felter v. Norton

Faxed to Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) 1-202-224-6331

CC Faxed to:

Senator, Robert Bennett (R-Utah) 1-202-228-1168

Senator, Daniel Inouye (Hawaii) 1-202-224-6747, U.S. Committee on Indian Affairs

Senator, John McCain (Arizona) 1-202-228-2862, U.S. Committee On Indian Affairs

Senator, Pete Domenici (New Mexico) 1-202-228-0900

U.S. Committee on Indian Affairs

Faxed on: July 20, 2005

CC: Oranna B. Felter