

1901 Cambridge Drive  
Kinston, NC 28504-2007

October 17, 2022

U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20230

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dr. Juan Ramon Aviles Morales, MD, and I am a member of the Guainía Taino tribe of the United States Virgin Islands, which has been recognized by the Government of the USVI in 2021. I respectfully request that a new category for self-identification be made for individuals who are indigenous to the Caribbean, under the Race category as Native Caribbean. We the people of the Taino Guainía tribe of the USVI identify as Native Caribbean and wish to be given the opportunity to have a category that reflects who we are. The Kalinago (formerly Caribs) are another Native Caribbean tribe that falls within the jurisdiction of the United States (who also reside in the USVI).

Currently, Racial categories are Native American or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and/or White. The cultural heritage of the Taino and Kalinago has many similarities to our Northern Indigenous counterparts, but our history and culture remain distinct. We share more in common with the indigenous populations from the Caribbean that include the Wayuu, Miskito, Garifuna, Jamaican Maroon, etc. than Native Americans from the continental United States. We seek to have representation and the ability to be heard and “counted” in the next census.

I am enclosing proclamations from the governor of the United States Virgin Islands, and my own paperwork demonstrating my enrollment into the Guainía Taino Tribe. I look forward to hearing from you and hope we can resolve this issue.

Sincerely,

Juan Ramon Aviles Morales, MD

Member of Guainía Taino Tribe of the US Virgin Islands

CC:

Office of Management and Budget

US Census Bureau