



Council of the Cherokee Nation

Cherokee Nation Tribal
Council
17763 S. Muskogee Ave.
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Legislation Text

File #: 20-018, Version: 1

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE RIGHTS SPECIFIED IN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS RESOLUTION #ABQ-19-012

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation since time immemorial has exercised the sovereign rights of self-government on behalf of the Cherokee people; and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation is a federally recognized Indian Nation with a historic and continual government to government relationship with the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation is committed to supporting and advocating for the protection of the most vulnerable and at-risk populations in our jurisdiction and around the world; and

WHEREAS, there is a humanitarian crisis in South and Central America that has resulted in thousands of Indigenous peoples fleeing extreme poverty, crime, political conflict and discrimination to seek refuge in the United States; and

WHEREAS, these indigenous migrants are often mistakenly identified as Latino or Hispanic when they enter the United States, creating a language barrier that prevents individuals from communicating their asylum request or even their most basic health care needs; and

WHEREAS, the inability of U.S. officials to communicate effectively with indigenous peoples contributes to the confusion and can lead to the denial of basic human and civil rights, including unnecessary deportations, detainment and family separation; and

WHEREAS, Cherokee Nation is dedicated to the preservation of our own native language and strongly supports the rights of indigenous peoples to communicate in their native languages; and

WHEREAS, Cherokee Nation, as a member of the National Congress of American Indians, supported the adoption of NCAI Resolution #ABQ-19-012 to protect and advance the human rights of indigenous peoples migrating to the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, given current practices under DHS, DHHS, DOJ, and Department of State and their immigrant serving agencies: Border Patrol (BP), Customs and Border Patrol (BP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), Federal Immigration court, and Federal Criminal Court, may be in violation of U.S. Executive Order 13166 that calls for language assessment and use of “primary languages”, international standards supported by the U.S. in the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the Organization of American States, American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP);

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Cherokee Nation calls on the United States government to create and implement methods to identify indigenous peoples at the U.S. border at first contact and

throughout short and long term detention, and during immigration proceedings in US immigration court and criminal court, and develop indigenous language resources for these individuals and families; specifically, as called for by NCAI Resolution #ABQ-19-012 which also “calls upon the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to create an Indigenous Language Advisory Commission.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cherokee Nation fully supports the adoption and implementation of all recommendations outlined in NCAI Resolution #ABQ-19-012.