



Council of the Cherokee Nation

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

Legislation Text

File #: 21-065, **Version:** 1

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FEDERAL INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL INITIATIVE AND ENCOURAGING SIMILAR EFFORTS BY CHEROKEE NATION

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

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, including exclusive jurisdiction over its reservation;

WHEREAS, federal Indian policy of the 19th and 20th century was aimed in part at “assimilation” of tribal members into so-called “civilized society,” and away from tribal lands, customs, language, traditions and familial ties;

WHEREAS, said policies included the formation of boarding schools for Indian children under the “Indian Civilization Act,” of 1819;

WHEREAS, many Indian children attending said boarding schools were coercively removed from tribal lands or otherwise due to pressure from the United States and other institutions;

WHEREAS, boarding schools deprived thousands of young tribal members of their language, culture, heritage, traditions and familial ties through curriculum that deemed these elements of their society “uncivilized” and through coercive measure, including physical coercion;

WHEREAS, recent discoveries of mass graves at boarding schools in Canada, which were formed under similar assimilation policies, has drawn much needed world wide attention to the failures of assimilation policies and the resulting injures to tribes and tribal members and has resulted in inter generational trauma that impacts tribes and tribal members today;

WHEREAS, United States Secretary of the Interior (DOI) Deb Halland issued a Secretarial Memorandum dated

June 22, 2022, launching the “Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative,” which, among other things, directs the department to “...undertake an investigation of the loss of human life and the lasting consequences of residential Indian boarding schools...”;

WHEREAS, the Council of the Cherokee Nation supports Secretary Halland’s aforementioned initiative;

WHEREAS, the Council of the Cherokee Nation encourages and supports efforts by the executive branch to participate fully in Secretary Halland’s aforementioned initiative and to undertake its own initiative to critically evaluate boarding schools historically within Cherokee Nation tribal lands as well as the impact of said boarding schools on Cherokee Nation and its citizens;

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE NATION, that the Council of the Cherokee Nation supports DOI Secretary Haaland’s Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, encourages the Cherokee Nation Executive Branch to participate fully in said initiative and to undertake its own evaluation of boarding schools historically on Cherokee Nation tribal lands.