



Council of the Cherokee Nation

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

Legislation Text

File #: JC-09-09, Version: 1

A JOINT COUNCIL RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO STATE RECOGNITION OF CHEROKEE "TRIBES" AND "INDIANS" IN ARKANSAS

WHEREAS, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Cherokee Nation have exercised the sovereign rights of self-governance on behalf of the Cherokee People since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians since time immemorial have exercised the sovereign rights of self-government on behalf of the Cherokee people: and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians are Federally- recognized Indian Nations with a historic and continual government-to-government relationship with the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Council unites the Legislative Branches of government of the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, representing approximately 294,000 Cherokee people throughout the United States of America: and

WHEREAS, the two Cherokee Tribal governments share a common history prior to forced removal in 1838, and then separate histories to the present, yet our common language, culture, and traditions have made the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians distinct and unique Native people from other Indian Tribes and other people, as was declared by the Joint Council in Resolution No. 392, adopted on August 11, 1992 in Cherokee, North Carolina: and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation has been aware of a growing number of non-Indian groups claiming to be Cherokee tribes or bands and that these groups have been organizing and attempting to gain federal recognition, this problem being acknowledged by the Joint Council in Resolution No. 008, adopted on October 3, 1988 in Cherokee, North Carolina: and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior through the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Branch of Acknowledgment and Research maintains the responsibility for addressing specific applications for Federal recognition and the Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians fully support the Federal recognition process; and

WHEREAS, the history of the Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is well documented and no other tribes or bands of Cherokee Indians exist aside from those already Federally recognized, which includes the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Cherokee Nation in Joint Council assembled in Resolution No. 4-96, adopted on October 4, 1996 have previously, expressed opposition to the "State recognition" process by the State of Georgia or other states such as Arkansas in the United States who may seek to recognize a group of 'Cherokee' which do not already have Federal recognition; and

WHEREAS, public funding by pseudo-Cherokee Tribes is of epidemic proportions and often involves membership fees promising individuals services; misleading presentations to school children and interference in a multitude of government functions including U.S. Indian Child Welfare Act cases; and

WHEREAS, the sovereignty, reputation and culture of the Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, as well as members the general public, continue to be in jeopardy due to the acts of individuals who organize and administer fabricated Cherokee 'Tribes.'

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Joint Council assembled, at which a quorum is present, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Cherokee Nation do hereby support the Federal-recognition process of the Department of the Interior as administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Branch of Acknowledgment and Research. and endorse the criteria used by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians denounce the State or Federal-recognition of any further 'Cherokee' Tribes or Bands. aside from those already Federally recognized. and commit to exposing and assisting State and Federal authorities in eradicating any group which attempts or claims to operate as a goN, ernment of the Cherokee people: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that no public funding from any Federal or State government should be expended on behalf of non-Federally recognized 'Cherokee' 'Tribes' or 'Bands' or individual members thereof: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Federal and State governments should stringently apply a Federal definition of "Indian" which includes only Citizens of Federally- recognized Indian tribes, to prevent non-Indians from selling membership in Therokee" Tribes' or groups for the purpose of exploiting the Indian Arts and Crafts Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED no 501(c)(3) organization, State recognized or unrecognized groups shall be acknowledged as Cherokee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED any individual who is not a member of a Federally recognized Cherokee Tribe, in academia or otherwise, is hereby discouraged from claiming to speak as a Cherokee, or on behalf of Cherokee citizens, or using claims of Cherokee heritage to advance his or her career or credentials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED no 'Cherokee' group in the State of Arkansas is valid including the so-called 'Western Cherokee Nation of Arkansas & Missouri,' 'Arkansas Cherokee Nation,' 'Chickamauga Cherokee of Arkansas or any other group claiming Cherokee in the name or alleged history for the purposes of creating a Tribal Nation or government: and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, this Resolution shall be the policy of the Joint Council of the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

Submitted by: Cara Cowan Watts, Deputy Speaker, Cherokee Nation
Big Cove Council Representative Perry Shell, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

