



# Council of the Cherokee Nation

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

## Legislation Text

**File #:** LA-10-91, **Version:** 1

An Act

Legislative Act #10-91

ACT RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TRIBAL POLICY FOR THE PROMOTION AND PRESERVATION OF CHEROKEE LANGUAGE, HISTORY AND CULTURE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CHEROKEE NATION: Section I. Application and Purpose.

The purpose of this Act is to provide for promotion and preservation of Cherokee language, history and culture. It will be commonly referred to as the Cherokee Nation Language and Cultural Preservation Act. This Act is in recognition that the survival of a people is dependent upon their capacity to preserve and protect their culture and language. This Act further promotes the acculturation of tribal youth through education about their history, language and culture and establishes tribal policy for the promotion and preservation of the Cherokee language and culture.

Section II. Establishment of the Official Language.

The Cherokee Nation does hereby officially establish both Cherokee and English as official languages for the tribe. The encouraged use of these languages is as follows:

A. Tribal Government. Any tribal member may speak in Cherokee or English in communicating with tribal government with regard to any programs or services provided. Any tribal member may use either Cherokee or English languages to communicate with the tribal council in any officially called meeting of the council on any occasion on which said person may be recognized to speak.

B. Translation Services. In any situation in which translation into English is deemed necessary or appropriate for persons using Cherokee language as defined in "A" above, translation services may be provided.

Section III. Language Maintenance.

It shall be the policy of Cherokee Nation to take the leadership to maintain and preserve the Cherokee language as a living language. Such efforts shall include but not be limited to:

A. Efforts to involve tribal members to the greatest extent possible in instruction in Cherokee language.

B. Establishment of a permanent Cherokee Language Program within the Tribal Education Department subject to such funding limitations as may exist from year to year.

C. Encourage the use of Cherokee language in both written and oral form to the fullest extent possible in public and business settings.

D. Encourage creation and expansion of the number, kind and amount of written materials in the Cherokee language and official encouragement for the development of materials on, by or through Cherokee Nation service programs.

Section IV. Education.

The Cherokee Nation promotes the use of the both the Cherokee and English Languages to the fullest extent possible within tribal, local, state and federal educational institutions, agencies and programs. It is therefore the policy of the Cherokee Nation:

A. To work with all schools, state and federal agencies and others to encourage that those schools which serve large percentages of Cherokee students adequately and fairly represent the language, history and culture of the tribe in the instructional, administrative and social processes of the school.

B. To the greatest extent possible within budgetary limitations, provide summer, evening, weekend and other tribal programs, for instruction of children and adults who have an interest in cultural education.

C. TO provide instruction in Cherokee language at the preschool level in programs operated by the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

D. To recognize certain tribal elders and talented tribal members as knowledgeable in the culture, language, history and related skills of the Cherokee Nation. These people may be recognized as "Eminent Persons" who may be employed in positions related to culture, language and history and may be paid for their educational services.

E. To oppose biased, stereotypic and/or derogatory depiction of Cherokees or American Indians within education institutions or wherever such representations which work to lower the self-esteem of Cherokee youth may be found.

Section V. Employment.

The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma acknowledges the need to provide bilingual clerical and other staff in programs and positions which call for extensive public contact with tribal members. Given the need to assure that the Cherokee language may be used in the work place for conduct of business between Cherokee speaking tribal members and staff of the Cherokee Nation and to promote good role modeling by Cherokee Nation staff, the following policies are adopted.

A. All Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma personnel shall become more knowledgeable in Cherokee history, language and culture.

B. The Cherokee Nation will provide an educational program for all Cherokee Nation employees in the history, language, and culture of the Cherokee Nation to become more knowledgeable in these subjects. This program will provide information which will promote pride and tribal identity and respect for tribal government and Cherokee people.

Passed by the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council on the 13th day of JULY, 1991.

ROLL CALL:

Sam Ed Bush	YEA	Joe Byrd	YEA
Gary Chapman	YEA	Sam L. Daugherty	ABSENT
James G. Eagle	YEA	Betty Buckhorn	YEA
Joe Grayson, Sr.	YEA	Amon Baker	YEA
Stann Hummingbird	ABSENT	Robert McSpadden	YEA
Patsy Morton	YEA	Jeff Muskrat	YEA
Harold Phillips	YEA	Goodlow Proctor	YEA
Woodrow Proctor	YEA		

John A. Ketcher, President Cherokee Nation Tribal Council  
Approved and signed by the Principal Chief this 13th day of JULY, 1991.  
Wilma P. Mankiller, Principal Chief Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma  
ATTEST: Gary Chapman, Secretary/Treasurer Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma  
Cha Secretary/Treasurer