



Council of the Cherokee Nation

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

Legislation Text

File #: 19-049, Version: 1

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING A CHANGE TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS TO ALLOW NON-INDIANS TO POSSESS AND USE EAGLE FEATHERS FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES

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

WHEREAS, the possession of bald and golden eagles, including eagle feathers, is illegal without a permit from the Fish and Wildlife Department under The Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940;

WHEREAS, the act was amended in 1962 to allow the use and possession of eagle feathers by Indian tribes for religious purposes;

WHEREAS, the existing federal regulation limit possession and use of eagle feathers to members of federally recognized tribes;

WHEREAS, a petition has been submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seeking that a changed be made to the federal regulation to apply to all 'sincere religious believers; who use federally protected feathers in their religious exercise;

WHEREAS, the petition's request, if granted, would allow non-Indians to possess eagle feathers and diminish the rights of Indians to use in ceremonial and religious practices that are sacred to tribes and tribal members;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department sought public comment without a meaningful consultation with Indian tribes as required;

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation has responded to the request for public comment and opposes any changes that would allow non-Indians to possess and use eagle feathers for religious purposes;

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE NATION, that the Council of the Cherokee Nation, in support of Cherokee Nation's efforts and official comment to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, hereby opposes the petition to change the federal regulation to allow non-Indians to possess and use eagle feathers for religious purposes and calls on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department to deny the petition;