

A BROADER COMMISSION

A Resolution to the 2001 Tennessee Native American Convention
submitted by the TNNAC Coordinating Committee

WHEREAS: The highest concerns voted on by the TNNAC caucus attendees are stated in Section 4 of House Bill 1617 as the “duty of the commission,” namely, and in order of their election:

- (7) Review all proposed or pending state legislation and amendments to existing state legislation affecting Indians in Tennessee;
- (2) Investigate relief needs of Indians of Tennessee and to provide technical assistance in the preparation of plans for the alleviation of such needs; and
- (8) Conduct public hearings on matters relating to Indian affairs and to subpoena any information or documents deemed necessary by the commission; and

WHEREAS: We believe in the greater distribution and sharing of decision-making responsibility and authority, the decentralization of power, and the participation of the larger community in determining issues; and

WHEREAS: The Tennessee Native American community needs to better use its more valuable resource: people; and

WHEREAS: It is beneficial to the Tennessee Native American community to take advantage of all persons willing to serve its best interests, and to maintain their active involvement; and

WHEREAS: The more people involved in Tennessee Indian affairs, the better educated we will all become, and the more experienced and competent will be our future Commissioners; and

WHEREAS: A specific plan of action is desirable in order to be able to achieve and measure specific results;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE 2001 TENNESSEE NATIVE AMERICAN CONVENTION THAT:

- 1.A Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs (TCIA) Advisory Council be created, composed of all nominees to the Commission of Indian Affairs currently not serving as Commissioner or Acting Commissioner, whose purpose shall be
 - (a) to study and research issues for consideration by the Commission,
 - (b) to advise the Commissioners on future actions, and
 - (c) to work with TCIA Committees on achieving their objectives.
 - (d) Members of this TCIA Advisory Council who were first runners-up to the Commissioner position shall be known as “Associate Commissioner,” and members who were second and third runners-up shall be known as “Assistant Commissioners.”
 - (e) The TCIA Advisory Council shall meet quarterly.
- 2.The following ten (10) Committees of the Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs be created to review and study issues, to work with existing organizations, and to make recommendations to the Commission:
 1. The Tribal Recognition Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) study and make recommendations on the recognition of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muskogee/Creek, Shawnee and Yuchi tribes by the state of Tennessee as the historic tribes of Tennessee.
 - b) study and report on the Melungeons of East Tennessee and the Choctaw of West Tennessee/Ripley as historic landed Native American communities.
 - c) work with the TCIA Native History Committee to study and report on surviving (post-Removal) Native communities in state.

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2. The Education Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) develop and implement elementary, middle, junior high and high school curricula on the history and culture of Native Americans in Tennessee, and to obtain teachers' and state's approval and implementation.
 - b) develop and implement Continuing Education courses and Conferences for state educators.
 - c) educate the state and promote the cessation and removal of all indian mascot names and pictures from TN schools.
 - d) establishment of Native American scholarships.
 - e) establish a liaison with the University of Tennessee and state colleges to promote the establishment of a Native American Studies programs.

3. The Health Care Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) study and determine the health care needs of Native Americans in Tennessee.
 - b) study and determine existing and potential resources and means available to deliver health care to Native Americans in Tennessee.
 - c) establish a liaison with the Indian Health Service offices in Nashville and Cherokee, North Carolina.
 - d) establish a home-visit program to visit the Native American elderly in the state.
 - e) study and develop a plan to create a regional Native American drug and alcohol treatment facility in state.

4. The Native History Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) collect and disseminate information on Native Americans in Tennessee history.
 - b) promote and support Native American genealogy study.
 - c) promote and develop a memorial to Dragging Canoe and Chickamauga Cherokee in Running Water, now Whiteside, Tennessee.
 - d) study and report on surviving (post-Removal) Native communities in state.
 - e) work with the TCIA Native American Tourism and Education Committees to promote historical and genealogical tourism.

5. The Legal Defense Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) continue promoting the recognition of resident Native Americans as "interested parties" in state cemetery-removal law.
 - b) study past law proposals and suggest new laws and amendments to benefit the preservation of Native American culture in Tennessee.
 - c) establish a liaison with the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) and National Congress of American Indians.
 - d) collect and study all historic legal documents pertaining to Native Americans in the state.
 - e) solicit funding for the defense of legal issues important to Native Americans in the state.

6. The Social Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) promote the visit and introduction of the BIA Eastern Region Office director, and the visit of the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) director, to the four major metropolitan areas.
 - b) plan and implement the annual celebration of Tennessee Native American Day.
 - c) plan and implement the rotating quarterly Commission meetings around the state (Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville) with local hospitality and meetings.

7. The Native American Tourism Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) develop and promote Tennessee Native history, genealogy, and
 - b) develop a plan for the creation of three or four Tennessee Native American Cultural Resource Centers/Libraries/Museums.

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8. The Archaeology Advisory Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) keep track of all Native American archaeological resources and interests in the state, to stay abreast of all archaeological developments in the state,
 - b) to observe and protect endangered Native American archaeological sites in the state,
 - c) to inform federally-recognized tribes of and promote their participation in all new and potential Section 106 archaeological investigations, ...
 - d) TCIA review of endorsement of Moccasin National Historic Landmark as a National Park.
 - e) TCIA review of endorsement of TVA Little Cedar Mountain land as a Native American cultural center/park.
 - f) assume responsibility for the nomination of three Native Americans to the Governor's Archaeological Advisory Council to the Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Director of the Division of Archaeology. Establish a liaison of Native American interests in this Council.
 - g) establish a liaison with the Cultural Preservation Committee of the Five Civilized Tribes Intertribal Council and with the Eastern Band of Cherokee.
 - h) establish a liaison with the the Environmental Planning and Permits Division, Archaeology Section, within the Tennessee Department of Transportation.
 - i) Establish a liaison with the Tennessee Valley Authority Historic Preservation Officer and archaeologists.
 - j) establish a liaison with the state Historic Preservation Officer and archaeologist.
 - k) establish a liaison with the University of Tennessee archaeology departments and archaeologists.
 - l) develop plans to establish the means by which to acquire and hold archaeological easements on property in Tennessee significant to Native Americans.
 - m) promote the respectful visitation and care of all Native American sites by Native Americans.
 - n) establish a liaison with municipal, county and state law enforcement officials, including the Native American Reserve Force of Hamilton County, to provide information, education and support for the protection of Native sites.
 9. The Public Relations Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) develop a quarterly newsletter to all interested Native Americans, organizations, state legislators, historic societies, etc.
 - b) develop an active TCIA website to disseminate and promote TCIA and Native American information.
 - c) disseminate and promote TCIA and Native American opinions on news issues.
 - d) establish a liaison with the BIA Eastern Region Office and the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET).
 - e) establish a liaison with the Governors' Interstate Indian Council (GIIC).
 10. The Staff and Support Committee, with the following purposes:
 - a) organize volunteers to prepare TCIA agendas and minutes, keep records, make photocopies, etc.
 - b) study and locate a TCIA office location.
 - c) locate, solicit, receive, and oversee the expenditure of financial support for the TCIA.
3. An annual TNNAC Delegates' Conference be created, on the third weekend of September, at which non-nominee delegates elected by caucuses to the TNNAC Convention shall
- a) review the efforts and work of the Commission, and
 - b) prepare and initiate others into the process of TNNAC elections.
4. We recommend that a first new TCIA Commission meeting for the fall (october-november-december) quarter of the "Commissioners-elect," also known as "Acting Commissioner/s," take place on Saturday, the 10th of November 2001, in Nashville.