

**The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL
of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES**

NUMBER 97-10

Supporting American Indian Transportation Act of 1997

WHEREAS,

the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes is an organization which unites the tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations, representing over 300,000 Indian people throughout the United States, and

WHEREAS,

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) expires and must be re-authorized in 1997 and Senate Bill 437, known as the "American Indian Transportation Act of 1997" was introduced to specifically address tribal transportation needs, and;

WHEREAS,

Transportation and other related issues under ISTEA are critical to Indian Tribes' economic development and quest for self-determination and the President of the United States has reiterated the Administration's policy for a government to government relationship between Tribes and the United States, and;

WHEREAS,

The Five Civilized Tribes find that ISTEA re-authorization legislation must be amended to include Indian tribes, who have the inherent power to prioritize their own transportation needs, with the same authority as other governments qualifying under the proposed act,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes does request that the United States Congress:

1. Reaffirm a strong federal interest and commitment to the national transportation system and to American Indian people;
2. Establish an Office of Indian Transportation, reporting directly to the Secretary of Transportation, to be responsible for the federal administration of highway and transit funds for Tribal Transportation;
3. Guarantee that a minimum of tow percent of all federal transit spending be allocated to tribal transportation needs.
4. Establish the same locally determined transit funding flexibility for the Indian Reservation Roads Program that state and local governments currently enjoy in the Surface Transportation Program.

5. Amend the proposed ISTEA legislation by adding and/or revising language to recognize and mandate tribal sovereign rights and to provide for direct tribal participation for all programs under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

Executed in regular session of the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting on April 11, 1997, by a vote of 25 for, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.

J. Garland Eagle Signed for
Joe Byrd, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation

Greg E. Pyle Signed for
Hollis Roberts, Chief
Choctaw Nation

Perry Beaver Signed
Perry Beaver, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Jerry Haney Signed
Jerry Haney, Principal Chief
Seminole Nation

Bill Anoatubby Signed
Bill Anoatubby, Governor
Chickasaw Nation