

The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES



Bill John Baker
Principal Chief



Bill Anoatubby
Governor



Gary Batton
Chief



James R. Floyd
Principal Chief



Leonard M. Harjo
Principal Chief

A Resolution in Support of Criminal Justice Reform through the Passage of Oklahoma State Question 780 and State Question 781

Resolution No.16-12

WHEREAS, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (ITC) is an organization that unites the tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations, representing over 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma has the second-highest rate of incarceration in the United States, and the highest rate of incarceration for women; and

WHEREAS, Nation-wide, Native American men are sent to prison at a rate that is four times the rate for white men, and for Native American women, the ratio is six to one; and

WHEREAS, in Oklahoma, Native Americans constitute 8.6% of the population, but 9.7% of the state's prison population; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma is spending nearly \$500 million on Corrections every year, a budget that has increased by 172% over the past twenty years; and

WHEREAS, spending nearly half a billion dollars to incarcerate people without investing in treating the underlying mental health issues and drug addiction is an irresponsible use of Oklahoma tax dollars; and

WHEREAS, State Question 780 reclassifies certain low-level offenses, like simple possession of drugs and property offenses under \$1,000 as misdemeanors, rather than felonies; and

WHEREAS, reclassifying these offenses from felonies to misdemeanors triggers cost savings in corrections spending; and

WHEREAS, State Question 781 directs the cost savings from the reduced incarceration rates back to local communities for mental health and substance abuse treatment, and job training and employment programs; and

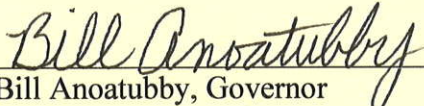
WHEREAS, imprisoning people for low-level offenses costs Oklahoma millions of tax dollars and does not address the underlying factors that contribute to crime thus creating a significant cost savings to the State of Oklahoma.


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes supports the passage of Oklahoma State Question 780 and State Question 781, which will allow Oklahoma to invest tax dollars in local communities to rehabilitate citizens, which is a more effective approach to crime reduction and keeping communities safe.

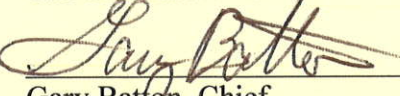
CERTIFICATION

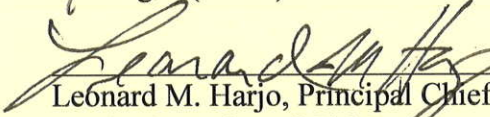
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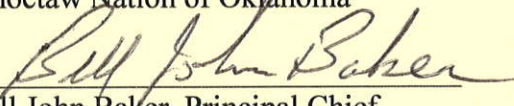
The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting in Catoosa, Oklahoma on this 8th day of April, 2016, by a vote of all for 0 against and 0 abstentions.


Bill Anoatubby, Governor
The Chickasaw Nation


James R. Floyd, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation


Gary Batton, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma


Leonard M. Harjo, Principal Chief
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma


Bill John Baker, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation