

The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

A Resolution Supporting Additional Federal COVID-19 Relief Funding and Additional Flexibility for Expending Coronavirus Relief Fund Dollars

Resolution No. 21-02



Chuck Hoskin Jr.
Principal Chief



Bill Anoatubby
Governor



Gary Batton
Chief



David W. Hill
Principal Chief



Greg P. Chilcoat
Chief

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 more than 750,000 Indian people throughout the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations are Indian Nations with a moral obligation and inherent sovereign right to protect their most vulnerable from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, tribal governments have provided the most basic and crucial services to Indian people during the COVID-19 crises, including income support, housing support, and life-saving medical services; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed the CARES Act, which was signed into law by President Donald Trump on March 27, 2020, and a second round of COVID-19 relief, which was signed into law on December 27, 2020. These important pieces of legislation provided much needed economic relief to entities across the country, including Indian tribal governments, in the face of the unprecedented global pandemic. Under the CARES Act, the \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) included an \$8 billion set aside for tribal governments and tribally-owned entities to alleviate hardship incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the HUD HIBG formula used to determine funding grossly undercounted tribal populations, and member tribes of the Five Tribes Council were among those most undercounted and underserved by this funding; and

WHEREAS, a Harvard University study found that the Choctaw and Cherokee Nations were the most underserved through the CARES Act funding, especially being two of the largest tribal populations in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the CARES ACT required stringent timelines and parameters for use of the CRF dollars. While the new law extends the deadline for using the CRF until December, 31, 2021, this extension does not provide additional funds nor does it increase flexibility in use of existing funds; and

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WHEREAS, Tribal nations have unique needs and roles as governments, businesses, health care providers, and provider of general services to Indian populations, and flexible uses are needed to address the unique needs of tribal nations; and

WHEREAS, in addition to funding and flexibility, COVID-19 legislation needs to provide protections from lawsuit liability our tribal businesses could face as we reopen our services and operations, because without revenue from our businesses, we cannot sustain the operation of our tribal government services; and

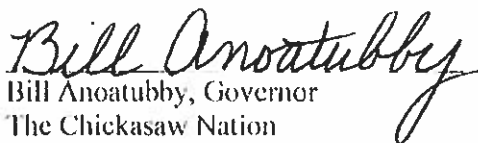
WHEREAS, the need for additional and flexible COVID-19 relief funding legislation with liability protection is clear, especially to serve citizens of the Five Civilized Tribes; and


NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes urges Congress to include tribal priorities, allow flexibility in spending down CARES Act funds, and distribute additional COVID-19 relief funding to meet the serious needs of Tribes to protect the health and safety of our citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, any future COVID relief legislation must also include liability protection for tribally owned businesses that provide a critical source of revenue for our tribal governments and the services that we provide.

CERTIFICATION


The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting virtually on this 8th day of January, 2021 by a vote of 17 for 0 against and 0 abstentions.


Bill Anoatubby, Governor
The Chickasaw Nation


David Hill, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation


Gary Bakon, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

ABSENT
Greg P. Chilcoat, Principal Chief
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma


Chuck Hoskin, Jr., Principal Chief

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Cherokee Nation