

The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

A Resolution Supporting Best Practices for Reducing the Spread of the COVID-19 Virus Until the Health Emergency has Passed

Resolution No. 21-07



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 approximately 750,000 Indian people throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 disease, caused by a virus that spreads easily from person to person which may result in serious illness or death, has broadly spread throughout Oklahoma, has already caused more than 2,400 deaths of Oklahomans and more than 340,000 deaths of Americans, and is a significant health risk to all of Indian Country; and

WHEREAS, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has found COVID-19 infection rates have been 3.5 times higher and mortality rates have been 1.8 times higher for American Indians compared to non-Hispanic whites; and;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 poses an especially high risk to our treasured elders who are the keepers of our culture and language and who must be protected so they can pass down essential cultural lessons to our younger generations; and;

WHEREAS, new cases and hospitalizations for COVID-19 in Tribal Health Systems have been sharply increasing to record highs in the past month, and this surge has put health care workers under extreme strain and compromised the ability of our health care system to deliver necessary care; and;

WHEREAS, the arrival of a COVID-19 vaccine is expected to end the pandemic in the coming year, but it will take several months for adequate supplies of that vaccine to be available to protect the majority of our Tribal citizens, so the next few months are extremely important for reducing the spread of the virus to save lives and protect our health care system until vaccines become broadly available; and

WHEREAS, social distancing, mask wearing, hand washing, limiting in-person gatherings; and allowing telework whenever possible are proven strategies for reducing spread of the COVID-19 virus and saving lives;

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes urges all of our Tribal citizens and neighbors on our reservations in Oklahoma to continue best practices for stopping spread of the COVID-19 virus, including

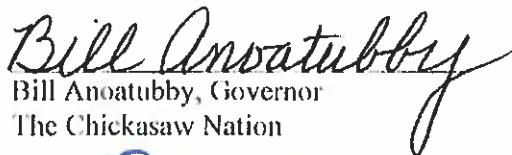
The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

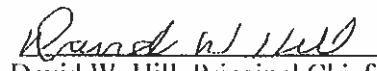
keeping your distance, wearing masks and requiring masks indoors and when social distancing is not possible, opting out of unnecessary in-person gatherings, allowing telework as much as possible, and supporting all businesses, workers, community groups, and family members to take COVID-19 precautions until the risk to our health, our elders, and our health care system has passed.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes urges all leaders in government, business, religious institutions, and community groups to set a good example for COVID-19 prevention and set strong policies and procedures for mitigating spread of the virus.

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 W. Hill, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation


Gary Batten, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

ABSENT
Greg P. Chilcoat, Chief
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma


Chuck Hoskin Jr., Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation