

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

NUMBER 2000-18
**OPPOSITION TO ENGLISH AS THE OFFICIAL
LANGUAGE PETITION DRIVE**

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 400,000 Indian people throughout the United States, and

WHEREAS,

The federal government of the United States has a unique relationship with Native American governments who have an interest in preserving and enhancing their languages to ensure the survival and continued vitality of their precious and ancient tongues; and

WHEREAS,

English-only legislation targets individuals for discriminatory treatment based solely on their language minority status; and

WHEREAS,

Native American languages have been used by the United States government in defending the United States and its citizens; and

WHEREAS,

Studies indicate that more than half of indigenous languages of the United States are considered “endangered” and many will have only a handful of speakers at the end of this century, and

WHEREAS,

A special interest group is seeking to make English as the official language in the State of Oklahoma through a petition to drive to place this issue on a state wide ballot; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma do hereby let it be known that they actively oppose this petition which will place English as the official language in the State of Oklahoma on the ballot in the next state wide election.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

That the Inter-Tribal Council will continue to actively support the maintenance, promotion, preservation, study, teaching, artistic use and survival of the Native languages of the United States and to oppose the petition to place English only on Oklahoma's next statewide ballot which works to prevent and/or hinder the maintenance, promotion, preservation, study teaching, artistic use and survival of the Native languages of the United States.

CERTIFICATION

Adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma meeting at the Choctaw Community Center, McAlester, Oklahoma on July 7, 2000, by a vote of 23 for, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.

Chadwick Smith Signed
Chadwick Smith, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation

Greg E. Pyle Signed
Gregory E. Pyle, Chief
Choctaw Nation

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

Jerry Haney Signed
Jerry Haney, Principal Chief
Seminole Nation

Kennedy Brown Signed for
Bill Anoatubby, Governor
Chickasaw Nation