

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 699

Short Title: State Recognition for The Tuscarora. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Goodwin.

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Federal Relations and American Indian Affairs, if favorable, State Government, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 19, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO GRANT STATE RECOGNITION TO THE TUSCARORA INDIANS AND TO PROVIDE REPRESENTATION OF THE TUSCARORA ON THE STATE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Whereas, the Tuscarora, also known as Skaru:re, hemp gatherers, the shirt wearing people, and the people of the sunken pines, are a pre-contact, First Nation Indian Tribe of North Carolina and are documented in North Carolina's and Virginia's Colonial records; and

Whereas, they are blood kin to the Haudenosaunee, People of the Longhouse, who are the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and the Seneca: The Five Nations that created the Iroquois Confederacy, which is one of the greatest and most powerful Native American groups in North American history. The Iroquois Confederacy abides by the Great Law of Peace that united the five tribes and brought peace to the people. The Great Law of Peace is the first form of democracy on the North American continent and was one of the founding principles for the United States Constitution. (U.S. Senate Resolution 76, 1987; U.S. House Concurrent Resolution 331, 1988); and

Whereas, The Tuscarora have demonstrated organized continuity spanning to pre-colonial times and have formally organized no fewer than 20 years ago with provided documentation and have maintained the core governing bodies of Tuscarora people to this day; and

Whereas, The Tuscarora have adopted The Tuscarora Council of the Great to unify and govern their people with one mind; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 71A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 71A-7.3. The Tuscarora; rights, privileges, immunities, obligations, and duties.

The Indians comprising three core communities: The Tuscarora Indian Nation of North Carolina Prospect Longhouse, Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina, and the Tuscarora Tribe of North Carolina, whose ancestors, in 1718, entered a treaty with the government of North Carolina and were granted Indian Woods, a 56,000-acre tract of lands on the Roanoke River in what is now Bertie County and who are of the same linguistic stock as the other tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy of New York and Canada, shall, from and after July 1, 2023, be designated and officially recognized as The Tuscarora, and they shall continue to enjoy all their rights, privileges, and immunities as an American Indian Tribe with a recognized tribal governing body carrying out and exercising substantial governmental duties and powers similar to the State, being



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1 recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to
2 Indians because of their status as Indians. The Tuscarora shall maintain individual enrollment
3 criteria, providing an opportunity for unenrolled Tuscarora descendants to enroll and shall govern
4 themselves in a manner that will benefit and unify all Tuscarora that come under their
5 governance."

6 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 143B-407 reads as rewritten:

7 "**§ 143B-407. North Carolina State Commission of Indian Affairs – membership; term of**
8 **office; chairman; compensation.**

9 (a) The State Commission of Indian Affairs shall consist of two persons appointed by the
10 General Assembly, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Assistant Secretary of
11 Commerce in charge of the Division of Employment Security, the Secretary of Administration,
12 the Secretary of Environmental Quality, the Commissioner of Labor or their designees and ~~21~~24
13 representatives of the Indian community. These Indian members shall be selected by tribal or
14 community consent from the Indian groups that are recognized by the State of North Carolina
15 and are principally geographically located as follows: the Coharie of Sampson and Harnett
16 Counties; the Eastern Band of Cherokees; the Haliwa Saponi of Halifax, Warren, and adjoining
17 counties; the Lumbees of Robeson, Hoke and Scotland Counties; the Meherrin of Hertford
18 County; the Waccamaw-Siouan from Columbus and Bladen Counties; the Sappony; the
19 Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation of Alamance and Orange Counties, The Tuscarora of
20 Robeson County, and the Native Americans located in Cumberland, Guilford, Johnston,
21 Mecklenburg, Orange, and Wake Counties. The Coharie shall have two members; the Eastern
22 Band of Cherokees, two; the Haliwa Saponi, two; the Lumbees, three; the Meherrin, one; the
23 Waccamaw-Siouan, two; the Sappony, one; the Cumberland County Association for Indian
24 People, two; the Guilford Native Americans, two; the Metrolina Native Americans, two; the
25 Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, ~~one,~~one; the Triangle Native American Society, ~~one-~~
26 one; The Tuscarora, three. Of the two appointments made by the General Assembly, one shall be
27 made upon the recommendation of the Speaker, and one shall be made upon recommendation of
28 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. Appointments by the General Assembly shall be made
29 in accordance with G.S. 120-121 and vacancies shall be filled in accordance with G.S. 120-122.

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31 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2023.