

# HJR236 INTRODUCED



1 HJR236  
2 2J9FEII-1  
3 By Representative Stringer  
4 RFD: Rules  
5 First Read: 11-Mar-26



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HJR\_\_\_ ENCOURAGING THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS  
TO EMBRACE ALABAMA'S STATE-RECOGNIZED TRIBES.

WHEREAS, the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission has notified the Alabama Legislature that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), a private organization dedicated to advancing and representing American Indian and Alaska Native populations, has recently broken with long-standing practice and denied Alabama's state-recognized tribes the ability to continue as Tribal Members in NCAI; and

WHEREAS, NCAI's denial deprives Alabama's state-recognized tribes of the rights, privileges, and benefits of Tribal Membership, including valuable legislative and policy insights and networking opportunities at the annual conference, all while disrespecting the tribes' status as Indians; and

WHEREAS, NCAI's denial of Tribal Membership is driven by these tribes' status as state-recognized and by NCAI's insistence that it should be able to look behind this state's recognition process to ascertain the legitimacy of the state's recognized tribes; and

WHEREAS, the state has long exercised its sovereign right to recognize tribes and provide for the state's relationship with the same; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama duly recognizes the



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29 Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Echota Cherokee Tribe of  
30 Alabama, Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama, Machis Lower  
31 Creek Indian Tribe of Alabama, Southeastern Mvskoche Nation,  
32 Cher-O-Creek Intra Tribal Indians, Mowa Band of Choctaw  
33 Indians, Piqua Shawnee Tribe, and the United Cherokee Ani  
34 Yua Wiya; and

35 WHEREAS, of these tribes, only the Poarch Band of  
36 Creek Indians is also recognized by the United States  
37 government, and the tribe was recognized first by the state;  
38 and

39 WHEREAS, the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission,  
40 established by the state in the Davis-Strong Act (Ala. Act  
41 No. 1984-257) is itself a testament to the state's respect  
42 for, and interest in, the state's recognized tribes and  
43 Indian residents; and

44 WHEREAS, a substantial majority of the commissioners  
45 are representatives of the state-recognized tribes, with  
46 each tribe recommending one representative to the Governor  
47 for appointment; and

48 WHEREAS, the other commissioners are an Alabama  
49 resident who is a member of a federally recognized Indian  
50 tribe, a member of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant  
51 Governor, a member of the House of Representatives appointed  
52 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and an  
53 appointee of the Governor; and

54 WHEREAS, the Commission's key role is to be a link  
55 between the State of Alabama and its recognized tribes and  
56 Indians; and



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57 WHEREAS, the Commission recently celebrated its 40th  
58 Anniversary, a milestone we commemorated in Ala. Act No.  
59 2024-362; and

60 WHEREAS, the purpose of the Commission is to deal  
61 fairly and effectively with Indian affairs, to bring local,  
62 state, and federal resources into focus for the  
63 implementation or continuation of meaningful programs, to  
64 provide aid and assistance to Indian communities, to promote  
65 recognition of the right of Indians to pursue cultural and  
66 religious traditions, and to provide a path for future  
67 recognition of tribes; and

68 WHEREAS, the Commission holds regular meetings that  
69 facilitate information sharing, including via presentations  
70 by, and connections to, government entities like the Alabama  
71 Department of Public Health and the United States Census  
72 Bureau; and

73 WHEREAS, the Commission has for decades administered  
74 a scholarship program for Indian children, which has  
75 distributed more than \$100,000 annually for the last decade;  
76 and

77 WHEREAS, more recently, the state has funded grants  
78 to the state-recognized tribes, and these grants are  
79 distributed by the Commission; and

80 WHEREAS, the Commission has served the public at-  
81 large by working with state and local governmental entities  
82 to prevent unauthorized individuals from usurping the name  
83 of a dormant governmental entity where that name could  
84 suggest to the public that the individuals were a bona fide



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85 Indian tribe in the eyes of the state when they were not  
86 (see AIAC Resolution No. 2023-01); now therefore,

87 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
88 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we encourage the National  
89 Congress of American Indians to embrace Alabama's  
90 state-recognized tribes, recognizing them as eligible for  
91 Tribal Membership in the organization for the benefit of the  
92 tribes, the NCAI, and the general residents of the State of  
93 Alabama.

94 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this  
95 Resolution be provided to the National Congress of American  
96 Indians for due and proper consideration.