



The Cherokee Nation is pleased to be a part of this election, and we are excited to provide you with information about candidates that will be on the Oklahoma ballot. A questionnaire was sent to each of the candidates in northeastern Oklahoma who are running for state-wide offices, as well as candidates for State Senate, State House and U.S. House of Representatives.

The Cherokee Nation believes that informed Cherokee citizens are an important part of protecting our sovereignty, that is why the Cherokee Nation has worked to provide Oklahoma voters with information about candidates that will be on the Oklahoma ballot. A questionnaire was sent to each of the candidates in northeastern Oklahoma who are running for state-wide offices, as well as candidates for State Senate, State House and U.S. House of Representatives.

Our voters representatives can affect our everyday life. Though the Cherokee Nation has become less reliant on federal funding over the years, we still rely on the government to fund a majority of our programs. We have hired federal officials and understand the value of what the Cherokee Nation brings to Oklahoma and our sovereign rights as a Nation.

The Cherokee Nation serves as a sovereign nation within the State of Oklahoma. It is important that state officials respect that sovereignty and agree to work with the Cherokee Nation to make our state a better place. Please take the time to review the voters guide and be sure to cast an informed vote on Tuesday, November 3rd. Remember your vote is your voice. Please vote in person on Election Day.

#### Issues Important to the Cherokee Nation

It is important that our citizens understand the issues that are important to the Cherokee Nation at the state and federal levels. This section of the voters' guide helps explain the questions that follow.

**Language Preservation:** Language preservation is vital to preserving our culture as indigenous Cherokees from all other people. The Cherokee Nation wants elected officials to support the preservation of tribal languages, assist in funding language programs, assist in the development of a comprehensive curriculum to Native American Language and instruction, and assist in providing support programs and institutions for Cherokee language instruction.

**Cherokee Schools:** The Cherokee Nation would like state officials to assist like they only allow state funding for charter schools in urban areas like Tulsa and Oklahoma City. By allowing charter schools in urban areas, voters could help establish to request in language immersion schools.

**State Sovereignty:** A basic right of sovereignty is that governments do not tax other governments. For example, the State of Oklahoma does not pay taxes to the federal government. Likewise, Indian tribes do not, and should not, pay taxes to other governments. Consequently, Cherokee Nation voters who disagree with the state to share income, but there are agreements between the governments. Congress are not the state as taxes, which typically are for imposed by the state without input from the people they are taxing.

**Environmental Issues:** Indian Nations, including the Cherokee Nation, have applied for the same recognition as states regarding environmental issues. Because tribes need land control and a local government over local environmental issues. If tribes do not have the ability to deal with logging and other issues on their lands, they must depend on the EPA, whose area offices are in Texas. Even the state does not have jurisdiction on Indian lands, it is important that local tribes have the authority to regulate the environment on their own land.

**Indian Reservation Roads:** Cherokee Nation has built more than 100 miles of roads. Such will be traveled on only by Cherokees, but also by non-Cherokees and diverse communities. We seek elected officials to support tribal control to the US Highway bill and continue to fund the TRB program.

**Preserving the Territories:** Cherokee Nation encourages federal officials to make the law investment in former Native American lands program. This will help businesses create thousands of new jobs and use the millions of dollars in investments. This investment will also help with the economic development of Oklahoma.

**Revisiting the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act:** The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act has provided economic opportunity for Cherokees and other tribes. The Cherokee Nation is against amendments that would limit tribal sovereignty.

Questionnaire were sent to the candidates running for Governor, State House of Representatives (in District 13 about Jonathan Stubbins), Deputy, Oklahoma, Oklahoma and Oklahoma counties and State Senate District 2 (Sharon and Ryan Stewart), and State Senate District 18 (Tina, Ryan and Ryan Stewart) and U.S. Representative in District 2, but answers from these voters are not included in the voters guide because candidates did not respond.