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CHEROKEE NATION®

Oklahoma Voters Guide



The November 4th elections are approaching, with a multitude of candidates and questions for Oklahoma registered voters to decide on.

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 ballots. A questionnaire was sent to each of the candidates in northeastern Oklahoma who are running for State Senate, State House, U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives.

Our elected representatives can affect our day-to-day lives. 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 must have federal officials who understand the value of what the Cherokee Nation brings to Oklahoma and our sovereign right as a nation.

The Cherokee Nation exists 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 a 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 4. Remember, **your vote is your voice**. Please make it count on Election Day.

Issues important to the Cherokee Nation

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

Water Rights

The Cherokee Nation retains the rights to water within our boundaries based on treaty provisions. It is important for state elected officials to acknowledge the Cherokee Nation's water rights, even as they represent all Oklahoma citizens.

State Taxation

A basic rule 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. Occasionally, Cherokee Nation enters into compacts with the state to share revenue, but these are agreements between two governments. Compacts are not the same as taxes, which typically can be imposed by the state without input from the people they are taxing.

Rights of tribes to decide their own citizenship

Tribal sovereignty includes the right for citizens of Indian Nations to decide their own citizenship requirements. Federal courts have consistently ruled that it is a fundamental right of Indian tribes to decide for themselves who is eligible for citizenship. Elected officials should acknowledge that tribes do indeed have the right to determine their own citizenship.

Indian Health Service Funding

In 2003, the per capita personal health care expenditures for the Indian Health Service (IHS) population totaled \$1,914, while the per capita amount for the total U.S. population totaled \$5,065. Furthermore, the Indian Health Service reports that the federal government spends, on a per capita basis, nearly twice as much on health care for prisoners as it does for American Indians. The Cherokee Nation has consistently advocated for additional funding

to address the serious unmet needs that exist in Indian Country and to bring funding for the Indian Health Service to a level comparable to other federally funded health programs.

Environmental Issues




Indian Nations, including the Cherokee Nation, have applied for the same recognition as states regarding environmental issues, because tribes need local control and a local presence over local environmental issues. If tribes do not have the ability to deal with keeping air and water clean on their lands, they must depend on the EPA, whose area offices are in Texas. Since 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.

Depreciation Tax Credit

Cherokee Nation encourages federal officials to make the tax incentives on former Native American lands permanent. This will help businesses create hundreds of new jobs and save them millions of dollars on investments. This incentive will also help with the economic development of Oklahoma.

HR 2824

HR 2824 was introduced by Congresswoman Diane Watson (D-CA) after the Cherokee people voted in March 2007 to restore itself to an Indian tribe made of Indians. Currently, some federal legislators are adding amendments to bills that would exclude Cherokee Nation from receiving funds for programs that are needed by Cherokee citizens. The citizenship issue is currently being reviewed in federal and tribal courts. Cherokee Nation has repeatedly asked Congress to allow the courts to decide the legality of the citizenship issue. **Please see last page for links to additional information on this issue.**





U.S. Offices	United States Senate		
	 Jim Inhofe (R) – Incumbent	 Andrew Rice (D)	 PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE Stephen P. Wallace (I)
1. Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Do you recognize the sovereignty of Indian Nations, and will you ensure the commitments made by the U.S. government in treaties and laws are followed?	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Will you work to ensure that Indian Health Service is funded for health care services at a level comparable with the health care provided to federal employees, prisoners, veterans and other government health systems?	Yes	Yes	Yes
5. Are you in support of Indian Nations having the same recognition as that of states regarding environmental issues?	No	Yes	Yes
6. Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	No Response	Yes	Yes
7. Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	Yes	Yes	Yes
8. Would you support making permanent the accelerated Depreciation Tax Credit for historically tribal areas?	Yes	Yes	Yes
9. Will you oppose HR 2824 and any other bills or appropriations amendments that would cut funding or punish the Cherokee Nation for its own citizenship decisions?	Yes	Yes	Yes

U.S. Offices

United States Representatives

	U. S. Representative District 1	U. S. Representative District 1	U. S. Representative District 2	U. S. Representative District 2
				
	Georgianna Oliver (D)	John Sullivan (R) – Incumbent	Dan Boren (D) – Incumbent	Raymond J. Wickson (R)
1. Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
2. Do you recognize the sovereignty of Indian Nations, and will you ensure the commitments made by the U.S. government in treaties and laws are followed?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
3. The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
4. Will you work to ensure that Indian Health Service is funded for health care services at a level comparable with the health care provided to federal employees, prisoners, veterans and other government health systems?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
5. Are you in support of Indian Nations having the same recognition as that of states regarding environmental issues?	Yes	No	No Response	Yes
6. Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	Yes	No Response	No Response	Yes
7. Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
8. Would you support making permanent the accelerated Depreciation Tax Credit for historically tribal areas?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
9. Will you oppose HR 2824 and any other bills or appropriations amendments that would cut funding or punish the Cherokee Nation for its own citizenship decisions?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes





State Representatives

	State Representative District 2	State Representative District 2	State Representative District 5	State Representative District 5
				
	Lawrence Mann (R)	Glen Bud Smithson (D) – Incumbent	Doug Cox (R) – Incumbent	Kelly Kerr (D)
1. Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
2. Are you in favor of partnerships between Indian Nations and state governments, i.e., tribal/state compacts and/or other joint agreements like cross deputization?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
3. Will you support the sovereignty of American Indian tribes and honor commitments made by the federal and state governments in treaties and laws?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
4. Currently, Cherokee Nation, along with other tribes, has several pending state legislative issues. Will you support the Cherokee Nation on issues like: a. Language Preservation b. Water Rights	a. No Response b. No Response	a. Yes b. Yes	a. Yes b. No Response	No Response No Response
5. Will you work to ensure Indians are able to fully access programs and services available to all Oklahomans?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
6. The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
7. Would you support a Native American Advisory Board to assist with the Oklahoma Department of Tourism, which will engage and motivate non-tribal and tribal governments and entities to leverage their individual resources to better market and promote Oklahoma's unique assets and diverse culture?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
8. Do you favor state taxation of Indian Nations?	No Response	No	No	No Response
9. Given the need for increased communication between Indian Nations and the state, do you favor a cabinet-level position for Indian Affairs within the state government?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
10. Would you support the State Department of Education collaborating with the tribal entities in developing a comprehensive and integrated curriculum, recognizing the diversity and culture of the various tribes that exist in the state?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
11. Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response
12. Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	No Response	Yes	Yes	No Response

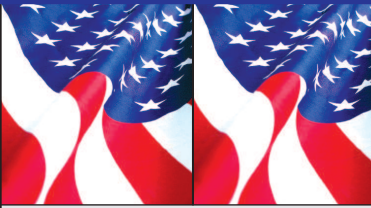


State Representatives

	State Representative District 9	State Representative District 9	State Representative District 10	State Representative District 10
				
	Tad Jones (R) – Incumbent	Bill Snyder (D)	Eric Epperson (D) – Incumbent	Steve Martin (R) – Incumbent
1. Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
2. Are you in favor of partnerships between Indian Nations and state governments, i.e., tribal/state compacts and/or other joint agreements like cross deputization?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
3. Will you support the sovereignty of American Indian tribes and honor commitments made by the federal and state governments in treaties and laws?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
4. Currently, Cherokee Nation, along with other tribes, has several pending state legislative issues. Will you support the Cherokee Nation on issues like: a. Language Preservation b. Water Rights	a. Yes b. Yes	a. Yes b. No Response	a. No Response b. No Response	a. Yes b. Yes
5. Will you work to ensure Indians are able to fully access programs and services available to all Oklahomans?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
6. The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
7. Would you support a Native American Advisory Board to assist with the Oklahoma Department of Tourism, which will engage and motivate non-tribal and tribal governments and entities to leverage their individual resources to better market and promote Oklahoma's unique assets and diverse culture?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
8. Do you favor state taxation of Indian Nations?	No	No	No Response	No
9. Given the need for increased communication between Indian Nations and the state, do you favor a cabinet-level position for Indian Affairs within the state government?	Yes	No Response	No Response	No Response
10. Would you support the State Department of Education collaborating with the tribal entities in developing a comprehensive and integrated curriculum, recognizing the diversity and culture of the various tribes that exist in the state?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
11. Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	Yes	Yes	No Response	Yes
12. Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes

State Representatives

	State Representative District 13	State Representative District 13	State Representative District 36	State Representative District 36
				
	Debbie Lienhart (R)	Jerry McPeak (D) – Incumbent	Scott BigHorse (D) – Incumbent	Eddie Fields (R)
1. Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
2. Are you in favor of partnerships between Indian Nations and state governments, i.e., tribal/state compacts and/or other joint agreements like cross deputization?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
3. Will you support the sovereignty of American Indian tribes and honor commitments made by the federal and state governments in treaties and laws?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
4. Currently, Cherokee Nation, along with other tribes, has several pending state legislative issues. Will you support the Cherokee Nation on issues like: a. Language Preservation b. Water Rights	a. No Response b. No Response	a. No Response b. No Response	a. No Response b. No Response	a. Yes b. No Response
5. Will you work to ensure Indians are able to fully access programs and services available to all Oklahomans?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
6. The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
7. Would you support a Native American Advisory Board to assist with the Oklahoma Department of Tourism, which will engage and motivate non-tribal and tribal governments and entities to leverage their individual resources to better market and promote Oklahoma's unique assets and diverse culture?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes
8. Do you favor state taxation of Indian Nations?	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
9. Given the need for increased communication between Indian Nations and the state, do you favor a cabinet-level position for Indian Affairs within the state government?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes

10.	Would you support the State Department of Education collaborating with the tribal entities in developing a comprehensive and integrated curriculum, recognizing the diversity and culture of the various tribes that exist in the state?	No Response	No Response	No Response	Yes
11.	Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	No Response	No Response	No Response	Yes
12.	Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	No Response	Yes	No Response	Yes

State Representatives		State Representative District 72	State Representative District 72		
		 Seneca Scott (D)	 PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE Lawrence Kirkpatrick (R) – Incumbent		
1.	Will you stay knowledgeable about Indian issues and consult with Indian Nations on issues that affect them?	Yes	No Response		
2.	Are you in favor of partnerships between Indian Nations and state governments, i.e., tribal/state compacts and/or other joint agreements like cross deputization?	Yes	No Response		
3.	Will you support the sovereignty of American Indian tribes and honor commitments made by the federal and state governments in treaties and laws?	Yes	No Response		
4.	Currently, Cherokee Nation, along with other tribes, has several pending state legislative issues. Will you support the Cherokee Nation on issues like: a. Language Preservation b. Water Rights	a. Yes b. Yes	a. No Response b. No Response		
5.	Will you work to ensure Indians are able to fully access programs and services available to all Oklahomans?	Yes	No Response		
6.	The Cherokee Nation has a very strong economic impact on northeastern Oklahoma. Do you have plans to partner with the Cherokee Nation to ensure our continued growth?	Yes	No Response		
7.	Would you support a Native American Advisory Board to assist with the Oklahoma Department of Tourism, which will engage and motivate non-tribal and tribal governments and entities to leverage their individual resources to better market and promote Oklahoma's unique assets and diverse culture?	Yes	No Response		
8.	Do you favor state taxation of Indian Nations?	No	No Response		
9.	Given the need for increased communication between Indian Nations and the state, do you favor a cabinet-level position for Indian Affairs within the state government?	Yes	No Response		
10.	Would you support the State Department of Education collaborating with the tribal entities in developing a comprehensive and integrated curriculum, recognizing the diversity and culture of the various tribes that exist in the state?	Yes	No Response		
11.	Do you support the use of Native languages in schools and workplaces?	Yes	No Response		
12.	Do you support the right of tribes to decide their own citizenship?	Yes	No Response		

NOTE: Note: Questions were sent to the candidates running for State Representative in District 14 (Cherokee and Muskogee counties) and State Senator in District 7 (Haskell, Latimer, Pittsburg and Sequoyah counties), but answers from those races are not included in the voters guide because those candidates did not respond.



www.meetthecherokee.org
www.cherokeemnationfacts.org
www.cherokeevoice.org
www.cherokee.org