



ALABAMA-COUSHATTA TRIBE OF TEXAS

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Tribal Chiefs

Principal Chief
Chief Kanicu
Donnis Battise

Tribal Council

Ricky Sylestine, Chairman
Nita Battise, Vice-Chairperson
Melanie Battise, Secretary
Crystal Stephenson, Treasurer
Tina Battise, Member
Yolanda Poncho, Member

ALABAMA-COUSHATTA TRIBAL COUNCIL ACITC Resolution #2024-65

Statement and Support for the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act and Bolstering Initiatives

PERTAINING, to the Tribal Council exercising its delegated power under Article IV, Section I – Powers, Constitution and Bylaws of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (the “Tribe”):

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council seeks to provide or assist in the provision of social, cultural, legal, economic, and other needs for the Tribal members; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council, as the governing body of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, located in Livingston, Texas has the power to exercise its full authority, rights, and responsibilities available under the Tribe’s sovereign nation status; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council is exercising its authority, rights, and responsibilities to promote and protect the health, peace, morals, education, sovereignty, jurisdiction, community, children, lands, resources, and general welfare of the Tribe and its members; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council believes that preserving the traditional and cultural history of the Tribe, and the traditional and cultural resources and practices of the Tribe, is a vital and fundamental goal of the Tribe, which helps to promote and protect the health, peace, morals, education, community, lands, resources and general welfare of the Tribe and its members; and

WHEREAS, assimilation and “civilization” processes against Native Americans, such as the Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices, were adopted by the United States to strip American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children of their Indigenous identities, beliefs, and languages; to assimilate them into non-Native culture through federally funded and controlled Christian-run schools, which had the intent and, in many cases, the effect, of termination, with dire and intentional consequences on the cultures and languages of Indigenous Peoples; and,

WHEREAS, more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Native children were forcibly removed from their family homes and placed in any of 460 Bureau of Indian Affairs-operated schools, including at least 367 known Indian boarding schools, often church-run, at which assimilation and “civilization” practices were inflicted on those

children as part of the federal government's goal of advancing eradication of Indigenous Peoples in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the United States Indian Boarding School policy's deliberate intent was to separate Native American children from their families, cultures, communities, and Tribal Nations through removal and reeducation; and,

WHEREAS, many Native American children were sent to boarding schools, that served as a place to experiment on and abuse our children medically, physically, psychologically, and sexually; and,

WHEREAS, the 2018 *Broken Promises Report* published by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights reported that American Indian and Alaska Native Peoples continue to experience intergenerational trauma resulting from experiences in Indian boarding schools, which divided families, undermined cultural and societal structures, damaged Indigenous identities, and inflicted chronic psychological damage to American Indian and Alaska Native children and families; and,

WHEREAS, Indian Boarding School policies have had lasting negative impacts on Native American children, and have drastically reduced our community's language fluency, and limited many of our families' social cohesion and advancement; and,

WHEREAS, Congress introduced legislation titled: To establish the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States, and for other purposes, the Act may be cited as the "Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act" on September 30, 2024, the National Day of Remembrance for U.S. Indian Boarding Schools.; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of this Act are to establish a Truth and Healing Commission (Commission) on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices in the United States to formally investigate and document, for the first time in history, the attempted termination of cultures and languages of Indigenous Peoples, assimilation practices, and human rights violations that occurred against American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians through Indian Boarding School Policies in furtherance of the motto to "kill the Indian in him and save the man"; and to formally investigate and document the impacts and ongoing effects of historical and intergenerational trauma in Native communities, including the effects of the attempted cultural and linguistic termination of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, resulting from Indian Boarding School Policies, among other things; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission's main role is to develop recommendations on actions the federal government can take to adequately hold itself accountable for, and redress and heal, the historical and intergenerational trauma inflicted by the Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas hereby supports congressional efforts to pass legislation approving the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices Act and bolstering initiatives, and subsequent recommendations, to hold the federal government accountable for, and redress and heal, the historical and intergenerational trauma inflicted by the Indian Boarding School Policies and Practices.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, Chairman of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, do hereby certify that the Alabama-Coushatta Tribal Council is composed of seven (7) members, of whom 5 were polled by electronic mail on September 12, 2024, and that the Tribal Council adopted this Resolution by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstained.



Melanie Battise
Secretary, Tribal Council



Ricky Sylestine
Chairman, Tribal Council