



May 3, 2023

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. issues statement on recent vetoes by Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt

“Cherokee Nation is a loyal friend to the State of Oklahoma. We are always ready to work with state lawmakers on issues that mutually benefit Cherokees and all Oklahomans.

This year we made progress on several of these issues. Unfortunately, Governor Stitt has chosen to continue his political attacks on tribes, even when it harms the health, safety and education of Oklahomans.

The Governor recently vetoed several good bills that are priorities for Cherokee Nation and that passed the Legislature by nearly unanimous votes. These include:

- SB 429, to protect the rights of Native Americans to wear tribal regalia and cultural items during school graduation ceremonies
- SB 267, to add experts on Native American health and obesity/diabetes prevention to the Advancement of Wellness Advisory Council
- SB 299, to prevent expiration of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education and reform its nominating process so that the Governor can no longer leave vacancies open for years
- HB 2608, to improve coordination between tribal, state and local law enforcement in monitoring registered sex offenders
- HB 2820, which continues the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (OETA). Cherokee Nation helps to fund OETA each year, and the network airs our award-winning OsiyoTV series statewide.

Preserving religious freedom, collaborating for better health and education, and protecting public safety are not ‘special favors’ to tribes. They are core responsibilities of good governments everywhere. Instead of coming to the table to work together, Governor Stitt is taking it out on the people of Oklahoma. I am thankful to have many reasonable friends in the Legislature who do not buy into the Governor’s counter-productive hostility to the tribal nations that share this land. I urge the Legislature to override the Governor’s vetoes, so we can continue our shared work for a stronger Oklahoma.”

– Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr.