

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025**

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**HOUSE BILL 600  
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H600-PCS10686-C1a-59**

Short Title: Recognition of the Tuscarora.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 1, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO RESTORE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION TO THE TUSCARORA AND TO  
PROVIDE THEM REPRESENTATION ON THE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Whereas, the passage of Senate Bill 642 by the 1971 General Assembly created the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, recognizing the existence within the State of certain named Indian tribes and also acknowledged the fact that members of other Indian tribes reside within the State; and

Whereas, the Tuscarora were recognized through treaties with the North Carolina government, but were not among those tribes recognized in 1971; and

Whereas, the Tuscarora were a powerful tribe at the time of the English settlement of the land that became North Carolina and Virginia and their prominent role in the early history of both states is well-documented; and

Whereas, the Tuscarora and the Cherokee are the only tribes to hold treaties with the North Carolina government; and

Whereas, the King of the Tuscarora was the signatory of the 1712 General Articles of Peace and the 1714 Sun and Moon Peace Treaty and these treaties helped establish a lasting and prosperous peace between the Tuscarora and the government and citizens of North Carolina; and

Whereas, the Tuscarora signed a stand-alone Treaty in 1717 with Governor Eden that reserved 56,000 acres of historic Tuscarora territory in Bertie County exclusively for the Tuscarora known as Indian Woods and in 1748, legislation reestablished the official boundaries and drew a map of its proximities; and

Whereas, for two centuries, parcels of Indian Woods were allotted to descendants of the Tuscarora Tribe and they have persisted as communities of Tuscarora People since that time and have reorganized and incorporated into The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories and appointed a tribal council to represent all North Carolina Tuscarora; and

Whereas, a review of historical documents and testimony confirmed the current Tribal Council of The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories consists of descendants of the historical Tuscarora Tribe; and

Whereas, the Tuscarora and its descendants contributed and continue to contribute to the settlement and growth of the State of North Carolina, have maintained their ethnic background, original language and culture and number among themselves families with names well-known throughout the area and the State; Now, therefore,  
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 71A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:



\* H 6 0 0 - P C S 1 0 6 8 6 - C I A - 5 9 \*

1 **"§ 71A-7.3. The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories; rights, privileges,**  
 2 **immunities, obligations, and duties.**

3 The Indians who comprise The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories, whose ancestors  
 4 signed treaties with the government of North Carolina and were granted the Indian Woods  
 5 Reservation on the Roanoke River in Bertie County, shall, from and after July 1, 2026, be  
 6 designated and officially recognized as The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories, and  
 7 they shall continue to enjoy all their rights, privileges, and immunities as an American Indian  
 8 Tribe with a recognized tribal governing body carrying out and exercising substantial  
 9 governmental duties and powers similar to the State. The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka  
 10 Territories shall be recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the  
 11 United States to Indians because of their status as Indians. The Tuscarora shall maintain  
 12 individual enrollment criteria, providing an opportunity for all North Carolina Tuscarora  
 13 descendants to enroll and shall govern themselves in a manner that will benefit and unify all  
 14 Tuscarora that come under their governance."

15 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 143B-407 reads as rewritten:

16 **"§ 143B-407. North Carolina State Commission of Indian Affairs – membership; term of**  
 17 **office; chairman; compensation.**

18 (a) The State Commission of Indian Affairs shall consist of two persons appointed by the  
 19 General Assembly, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Assistant Secretary of  
 20 Commerce in charge of the Division of Employment Security, the Secretary of Administration,  
 21 the Secretary of Environmental Quality, the Commissioner of Labor or their designees and ~~24~~23  
 22 representatives of the Indian community. These Indian members shall be selected by tribal or  
 23 community consent from the Indian groups that are recognized by the State of North Carolina  
 24 and are principally geographically located as follows: the Coharie of Sampson and Harnett  
 25 Counties; the Eastern Band of Cherokees; the Haliwa Saponi of Halifax, Warren, and adjoining  
 26 counties; the Lumbees of Robeson, Hoke and Scotland Counties; the Meherrin of Hertford  
 27 County; the Waccamaw-Siouan from Columbus and Bladen Counties; the Sappony; the  
 28 Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation of Alamance and Orange Counties, The Tuscarora Indians  
 29 of Kahtenuaka Territories, and the Native Americans located in Cumberland, Guilford, Johnston,  
 30 Mecklenburg, Orange, and Wake Counties. The Coharie shall have two members; the Eastern  
 31 Band of Cherokees, two; the Haliwa Saponi, two; the Lumbees, three; the Meherrin, one; the  
 32 Waccamaw-Siouan, two; the Sappony, one; the Cumberland County Association for Indian  
 33 People, two; the Guilford Native Americans, two; the Metrolina Native Americans, two; the  
 34 Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, ~~one,~~one; the Triangle Native American Society, ~~one-  
 35 one; The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories, two. Of the two appointments made by  
 36 the General Assembly, one shall be made upon the recommendation of the Speaker, and one shall  
 37 be made upon recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. Appointments by  
 38 the General Assembly shall be made in accordance with G.S. 120-121 and vacancies shall be  
 39 filled in accordance with G.S. 120-122.~~

40 ...."

41 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 143B-135.5 reads as rewritten:

42 "Part 30A. American Indian Heritage Commission.

43 **"§ 143B-135.5. American Indian Heritage Commission established.**

44 ...

45 (b) Members. – The Commission shall consist of ~~12 members. The initial board shall be~~  
 46 ~~selected on or before February 1, 2022, as follows:~~13 members, as follows:

- 47 (1) One representative recommended by each of the following tribes: Coharie,  
 48 Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin,  
 49 Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Sappony, The Tuscarora Indians of  
 50 Kahtenuaka Territories, and Waccamaw-Siouan.

1 (2) One representative recommended by each of the following organizations:  
2 Cumberland County Association for Indian People, Guilford Native American  
3 Association, Metrolina Native American Association, and the Triangle Native  
4 American Society.

5 (c) Terms. – The members recommended by the Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee  
6 Indians, Haliwa-Saponi, and Lumbee Tribes and the members recommended by the Cumberland  
7 County Association for Indian People and the Guilford Native American Association shall serve  
8 initial terms of two years expiring on June 30, 2023. The members recommended by the  
9 Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Sappony, and Waccamaw-Siouan Tribes and  
10 the members recommended by the Metrolina Native American Association and the Triangle  
11 Native American Society shall serve initial terms of three years expiring on June 30, 2024. The  
12 member recommended by The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories shall serve an initial  
13 term of three years expiring on June 30, 2029. Upon the expiration of the terms of the initial  
14 members of the Commission, each member shall be appointed to terms for three years and shall  
15 serve until a successor is appointed.

16 ...."

17 **SECTION 4.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
18 Administration the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in nonrecurring funds to assist the North  
19 Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs with updating its website, materials, and other  
20 documentation to reflect the new membership of the Commission.

21 **SECTION 5.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
22 Natural and Cultural Resources the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in nonrecurring funds  
23 to assist the American Indian Heritage Commission with updating its website, materials, and  
24 other documentation to reflect the new membership of the Commission.

25 **SECTION 6.** Sections 4 and 5 of this act become effective July 1, 2026. The  
26 remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.