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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 171

House Amendments in [] - February 9, 2010

Extending state recognitions to the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of Southampton County, Virginia.

Patron Prior to Engrossment—Delegate Tyler

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Hand Site Excavation (44SN22) in Southampton County carbon dates the ancestors of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians in Southampton County, Virginia, to approximately 1580; and

WHEREAS, many believe that the site existed as early as 900 AD; and

WHEREAS, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe first made ethno-historic contact with the English in 1607-1608 in what is now Nottoway County, Virginia, when the English were looking for information regarding the English community on Roanoke Island also known as the "Lost Colony"; and

WHEREAS, in 1607 the tribe was called Man-goak or Men-gwe by the Powhatan Confederation's "Algonquian Speakers" and listed in the upper left hand quadrant on John Smith's 1607 map of Virginia by the same name in what is now Nottoway County; and

WHEREAS, the English colonist gave names to other Indian tribes based on what the Indians they had first contact with called other tribes, such as, the Algonquian Speakers calling the Cheroenhaka, "NA-DA-WA," or Nottoway as perceived by the Colonials; and

WHEREAS, in the 17th century, Virginia Indians (Natives) were divided into three language groups: Algonquian Speakers, Siouan Speakers and Iroquoian Speakers; and

WHEREAS, in the 17th century, the Iroquoian speaking tribes occupied lands east of the Fall Line on the inner Coastal Plains of Southeastern Virginia and these tribes were the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway), the Meherrin, and the Tuscarora; and

WHEREAS, in 1650 according to the diary entries of James Edward Bland, the Nottoway Indians were called by the Algonquian Speakers as NA-DA-WA, which the Colonials transcribed as Nottoway; and

WHEREAS, in August 1650, Bland encountered two Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian villages. The first town, located in what is now Sussex County near Rowantee Branch/Creek, was "Chounterounte Town." At that time Chounterounte (Cho-un-te-roun-te) was king/Chief of the Nottoways. The second town, Tonnatorah, was located on the south side of the Nottoway River where the current Sussex - Greenville County line meets the River; and

WHEREAS, the true name of the tribe is Cheroenhaka (Che-ro-en-ha-ka), meaning "People at the Fork of the Stream"; and

WHEREAS, the tribe's lodging area was where the Nottoway River forked with the Backwater River to form the Chowan River; thus, "People at the Fork of the Stream"; and

WHEREAS, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe signed three treaties: (i) the Treaty of 1646, (ii) the Treaty of 1677, and (iii) the Stand Alone Treaty of February 7, 1713; and

WHEREAS, the Stand Alone Treaty was signed by Colonial Lt. Governor Spotswood with the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe's Chief "Ouracoorass Teerheer," called William Edmund, by the Colonials, and this treaty has a "Successor Clause"; and

WHEREAS, the Cheroenhaka tribal government (Council) contends that the Successor Clause meant that the recognized relationship the tribe had with the Colonials from 1713 to 1775 continued with the Commonwealth of Virginia beginning in 1776 to the present time; and

WHEREAS, tribal warriors of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe joined forces with Nathaniel Bacon in what became known as the infamous Bacon's Rebellion of May 1776, which resulted in the downfall of Occaneechee Island Indians on the Roanoke River; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1680s, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe, due to encroachment by the Colonials and to avoid war with other tribes, moved from the Nottoway town of Ta-ma-hit-ton/Tonnatorah in Sussex County to the mouth of the Assamoosick Swamp in what is now Surry County, and moved again in the mid-1690s farther down the Assamoosick toward present-day Courtland and Sebrell in what was then Isle of Wight County, currently Southampton County; and

WHEREAS, in 1705 the House of Burgesses granted two tracts of land to the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe, the Circle and Square Tracts consisting of some 41,000 acres of reservation land. The tracts of land fell within the confines of what was then Isle of Wight County, now called Southampton County, annexed from Isle of Wight County in 1749, and Sussex County; and

WHEREAS, in 1711 Colonial Lt. Governor Alexander Spotswood met with the Cheroenhaka offering "Tribute" forgiveness, referenced in the Treaty of 1677, if the Cheroenhaka would send their sons to the

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59 Brafferton, a school for Indians at The College of William and Mary; and

60 WHEREAS, even though the Cheroenhaka were fearful their sons would be sold into slavery,
61 ethno-historic records document that Spotswood reported on November 17, 1711, that two sons of the
62 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Chief's men were attending the Brafferton; and

63 WHEREAS, Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian surnames continued to appear on the enrollment roster
64 of the Brafferton throughout the 1750s and 1760s; and

65 WHEREAS, in March 1713, the Colonial Council at Williamsburg ordered that the Meherrin Indians
66 be incorporated with the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians and that the Nansemond Indians be
67 incorporated with the Saponies with the purpose of removing them to a place where they would be less
68 liable to have differences with the English and for the instruction of their children in Christianity by
69 missionaries at the two settlements; and

70 WHEREAS, on August 10, 1715, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) King and eight Great Men (Nottoway
71 Chief Men) were invited to the capital in Williamsburg and put in irons and chains for three days until
72 they consented to send 12 of their children to attend school at Fort Christiana; and

73 WHEREAS, on August 13, 1715, the chains were removed and they were ordered released; and

74 WHEREAS, on December 10, 1719, a list of names of eight Nottoway and 12 Meherrin children
75 were given to the Colonial Council in Williamsburg to attend school at Fort Christiana; and

76 WHEREAS, on November 30, 1720, the Colonial Council ordered that a collection of all transactions
77 with Tributary Indians or Foreign Indians be made and that the clerk of the council make a collection of
78 all negotiations with the Indians from first settlement of the Colony; and

79 WHEREAS, on August 7, 1735, Henry Briggs and Thomas Wynn, the Indian interpreters for the
80 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians were dismissed by an Act of the Commonwealth and on the same day
81 the "first" of many land transfer deeds for the "Circle Tract of Land" transpired between the Colonials
82 and the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Chief's Men and would continue up until November 1953, until both
83 Circle and Square Tracts of Lands (41,000 acres of reservation land), were in the hands of the
84 non-indigenous; and

85 WHEREAS, on December 19, 1756, George Washington submitted a letter to the Honorable Robert
86 Dinwiddie expressing an interest among the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians to provide assistance to the
87 Colonials; and

88 WHEREAS, on March 8, 1759, a petition for pay to Tom Steph, Billy John(s), School Robin, and
89 Aleck Scholar, all of which are Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians who served under George Washington
90 in the French and Indian Wars until the reduction of Fort Duquesne; and

91 WHEREAS, in July of 1808, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia mandated a "Special"
92 Nottoway Indian Census be taken of those Indians living on the remaining lands of the Nottoway Indian
93 Reservation in what is now Courtland, Virginia, consisting of 7,000+ acres; and

94 WHEREAS, the Special Census was conducted by "White" Trustees, Henry Blow, William Blow (a
95 descendant of John Blow), and Samuel Blunt; and

96 WHEREAS, not all Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians living on the Reservation were enumerated; and

97 WHEREAS, in 1816 new trustees were appointed for the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians
98 empowered to make reasonable rules and regulations for the government of the tribe and for the
99 expenditure of the money held in trust for them, which was to continue so long as any member of the
100 tribe were living with any remaining to be paid into the public treasury; and

101 WHEREAS, in 1820 President Thomas Jefferson procured a copy of the language of the
102 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians as recorded by John Wood, who recorded the language on March 4,
103 1820, from Edie Turner, who lived on the tribe's reservation in Southampton County, Virginia. Jefferson
104 subsequently sent a copy of the language to Peter DuPonceau of Philadelphia, who recognized the
105 language as Iroquoian and on March 17, 1820, Jefferson was quoted in an article that appeared in the
106 Petersburg newspaper, that the only remains in the state of Virginia of the formidable tribes are the
107 Pamunkeys and Nottoways (Cheroenhaka) and a few Mattaponi; and

108 WHEREAS, according to Albert Gallatin (Gallatin 1836:82), the Honorable James Tresevant
109 (Trezevant) compiled a second recording of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) language in Southampton
110 County, Virginia, between 1831 and 1836. Tresevant reported that the Nottoway name for themselves
111 was Cheroenhaka, sometimes spelled "Cherohakah"; and

112 WHEREAS, in 1823-24 William Bozeman, also known as Billy Woodson (name listed on the
113 Special Nottoway Indian Census of 1808, Note: Billy Woodson's father was white - Michal Boseman),
114 filed a petition with the Court of Southampton County to have the remaining Nottoway Indian
115 Reservation Lands divided "Free and Simple" between the Nottoway Indians; and

116 WHEREAS, on February 5, 1849, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe filed suit in the
117 Commonwealth of Virginia Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery for Southampton County
118 against Jeremiah Cobb; and

119 WHEREAS, the suit was filed on behalf of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian tribal members by
120 the tribe's trustees, James W. Parker, G.N.W. Newsom, and Jesse S. Parham, all of whom were

121 European; and

122 WHEREAS, on November 8, 1850, Judge Rich H. Baker, Court of Southampton County, ruled in
123 favor of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe and on March 3, 1851, as witnessed by Littleton R.
124 Edwards, Clerk of said court, awarded them \$818.80 with interest from June 1, 1845; and

125 WHEREAS, as a result of the successful court case in 1851, the Commonwealth of Virginia in the
126 Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery for Southampton County, Virginia recognized the
127 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of Southampton County, as a Tribe, and has never, since that
128 time, by way of Law, Act, Bill or Policy negated its tribal status; and

129 WHEREAS, in the 1850s, as the final bits of reservation land was disappearing into the hands of the
130 Europeans, many Tribal members—Artist, Bozeman, Turners, Rogers, Woodson, and Brown—relocated
131 to what became known as "Artist Town" near what is now Riverdale Road in Southampton County,
132 Virginia. Their descendants continued to live there as a tribal communal group until the late 1990s,
133 sharing their Native American Traditions and Customs of hunting, trapping, tanning hides, fishing,
134 farming, and raising hogs; and

135 WHEREAS, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe is the only Iroquoian tribe still residing in the
136 Commonwealth of Virginia claiming a documented continual existing "state recognized" status
137 [Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe vs Jeremiah Cobb, March 3rd, 1851, Circuit Superior Court of
138 Law and Chancery for the County of Southampton]; and

139 WHEREAS, in 1877 some 575 acres of tribal reservation land in Southampton County was divided
140 between five Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian families whose descendents still reside in Southampton
141 County; and

142 WHEREAS, in 1965, 1966, and 1969, an excavation of the Hand Site Settlement (44SN22) in
143 Southampton County, Virginia, near Highway 671 was conducted, wherein some 131 documented grave
144 remains of Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian bones were removed and placed on a shelf at the
145 Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. All nonskeletal remains are housed
146 at the Department of Historical Resources, Richmond, Virginia; and

147 WHEREAS, in February 2002, the historic Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe reorganized by
148 bringing together family clusters of Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian descendants and families still living
149 in Southampton County, Virginia; and

150 WHEREAS, in May 2002, a tribal government was established with the election of Chief Walter
151 "Red Hawk" Brown as the first modern day Chief as well as other Council members; and

152 WHEREAS, the first Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe Powwow and Gathering took place on
153 the grounds of the Southampton Agriculture and Forestry Museum, Courtland, Virginia, on July 24,
154 2002, and has continued annually at the Southampton County Fairgrounds on the fourth weekend of July
155 as a celebration of the "Green Corn Harvest"; and

156 WHEREAS, on December 7, 2002, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe filed a letter of intent
157 with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) announcing that it would be filing for Federal Recognition; and

158 WHEREAS, on July 29, 2003, the Court of Southampton County, Virginia, issued a license to Chief
159 Walter "Red Hawk" Brown of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe, with all rights to perform the
160 rites of matrimony for the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe in accordance with the customs and
161 traditions of the tribe. On February 27, 2004, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribal Shield and
162 Heraldry was copyrighted with the Library of Congress (VA 1-256-506); and

163 WHEREAS, on July 23, 2004, Issue I of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe
164 Southampton County Virginia, the *WASKEHEE* was published, documenting the ethno-history of the
165 tribe as written and documented by Chief Walter "Red Hawk" Brown under the title "Creator, My Heart
166 Speaks" and has continued annually thereafter. All of the written documentation has been archived at the
167 Library of Virginia and Issue I of the *WASKEHEE* was copyrighted with the U.S. Copyright Office on
168 August 3, 2007, Reg. # TX 6-627-973; and

169 WHEREAS, on July 24, 2004, the Southampton County Board of Supervisors issued under its seal a
170 Proclamation of Recognition of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe proclaiming July 24 of that
171 year as "Cheroenhaka Day"; and

172 WHEREAS, on September 21, 2004, the tribe participated, as one of 500 tribes and approximately
173 20,000 Indians, in the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.;
174 and

175 WHEREAS, Chief Walter "Red Hawk" Brown was interviewed by ABC News and provided
176 comments as to what it meant as a Native American to be a part of the great celebration; and

177 WHEREAS, on June 3, 2005, the State Recognized Waccamaw Indian Tribe of South Carolina voted
178 in favor of a Joint Resolution of the Waccamaw Tribal Government, Resolution Number:
179 Joint-HH-06-04-05-001, recognizing the sovereignty of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe,
180 Southampton County, Virginia, as signed by the Honorable Chief Harold D. Hatcher; and

181 WHEREAS, on June 13, 2005, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribal Heritage Foundation was

182 incorporated as the 501(c)(3) tax exempt, nonprofit entity of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe;
183 and

184 WHEREAS, on July 23, 2005, Issue II of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe,
185 Southampton, Virginia, the *WASKEHEE*, was published depicting Spotswood's Treaty with the
186 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians in February 27, 1713, including a listing of the tribe's vocabulary as
187 recorded by John Wood in 1820. Issue II of the *WASKEHEE* was copyrighted with the U.S. Copyright
188 Office on April 23, 2007, Reg. # TX 6-595-331; and

189 WHEREAS, on October 14, 2005, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe's elected officials along
190 with other tribal members and educators, visited the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History,
191 Washington, D.C., at the invitation of Dr. Dorothy Lippert, Case Officer, Repatriation Programs, and
192 viewed, in a special showing, of Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian "Skeletal Remains" taken from the
193 Hand Site Excavation dating back to 1580; and

194 WHEREAS, on January 18, 2006, Senate Joint Resolution No. 152 was introduced during the 2006
195 Session of the General Assembly to extend state recognition to the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian
196 Tribe; and

197 WHEREAS, on July 22, 2006, Issue III of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe
198 Southampton County, Virginia, the *WASKEHEE*, was published capturing the tribe's visit to the National
199 Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C., on October 14, 2005, in which the skeletal remains of
200 the Hand Site Excavation were viewed; and

201 WHEREAS, Issue III of the Journal also documents the writing of William Byrd and his visit to the
202 tribe's reservation in what is now Southampton County on April 7, 1728, and was copyrighted with the
203 U.S. Copyright Office on December 11, 2006, Reg. # TX 6-506-719; and

204 WHEREAS, on July 22, 2006, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe launched its website,
205 <http://www.cheroenhaka-nottoway.org>, providing access to the tribe's Constitution and Bylaws,
206 ethno-historic and current history, Powwow events, tribal special census, and educational presentations;
207 and

208 WHEREAS, on September 25, 2006, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe conducted a Peace
209 Belt and Pipe Ceremony by the banks of the Nottoway River on the grounds of the Southampton
210 County Court House that was open to the public; and

211 WHEREAS, the ceremony was attended by elected officials from the Counties of Nottoway, Sussex,
212 Isle of Wight, Surry and Southampton, all of whom shared in the tribe's traditional ceremony of passing
213 the Peace Pipe and accepting a Wampum (Ote-ko-a) Belt from Chief Walter "Red Hawk" Brown; and

214 WHEREAS, all five of the counties that were present at the ceremony presented Proclamations of
215 Recognition from their respective counties; and

216 WHEREAS, the tribe's Sixth Annual Powwow and Gathering took place on July 21 and 22, 2007, at
217 the Southampton County Fairgrounds, Courtland, Virginia, as a celebration of 427 years of documented
218 ethno-history (1580 to 2007); and

219 WHEREAS, the name of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe, Southampton County, Virginia,
220 in recognition is now listed on the Honor Wall of the National Museum of the American Indian in
221 Washington, D.C., effective February 2007; and

222 WHEREAS, on July 21, 2007, Issue IV of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe,
223 Southampton County, Virginia, the *WASKEHEE*, was published as a Jamestown 2007 Special Edition
224 recording Colonial Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood's visit to the tribe reservation in 1711
225 with 1,600 armed men inviting the Chief Men to send their sons to the Brafferton, and Issue IV also
226 records the first Land Deed of Sale, on November 24, 1735, between Charles Simmons and the
227 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indians with actual marks of the tribal Chief Men. Issue IV of the *WASKEHEE*
228 was copyrighted with the U.S. Copyright Office on August 16, 2007, Reg. # TX 6-820-738; and

229 WHEREAS, on July 26, 2008, Issue V of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe,
230 Southampton County, was published documenting the tribe's visit to the Library of Virginia to accept an
231 award on behalf of Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Queen Edith Turner (Wane' Roonseraw), 1734-1838.
232 The Journal also captured Turner's last will and testament; to include a transcribed copy of the 1808
233 Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian "by name" Special Census; and

234 WHEREAS, on March 20, 2009, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe, Southampton County,
235 Virginia, reclaimed, by purchase, 100 acres of its former 41,000-acre reservation land—formerly the
236 Square Tract for the purpose of building a combined Tribal Educational Center and Museum, an
237 Interactive "Palisade" Native American Indian Village with "Longhouses"—Cattashowrock Town, a
238 Worship Center and the tribe's own Powwow Grounds; and

239 WHEREAS, on July 25, 2009, Issue VI of the Journal of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe
240 Southampton County, Virginia, the *WASKEHEE*, was published with a second listing of the tribal
241 language as recorded by John Wood in 1820, with copies of letters between Thomas Jefferson and Peter
242 DuPonceau certifying that the tribe is Iroquoian speaking; and

243 WHEREAS, on November 20 and 21, 2009, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe entered into a

244 partnership with First Landing Foundation Historical Villages at Cape Henry, Fort Story, Virginia Beach,
245 and the Archeological Society of Virginia, Nansemond Chapter, to conduct a Native History School Day
246 and a Corn Harvest Fall Festival Powwow; and

247 WHEREAS, from May 2009 through December 2009, Chief Walter "Red Hawk" Brown, along with
248 the support of other tribal members and the Archeological Society of Virginia, Nansemond Chapter,
249 gave Native American ethno-historical educational presentations to more than 2,500 students from
250 different public schools throughout Hampton Roads, Richmond, Southside, and Western Virginia
251 including sharing the history, Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian and other prehistoric artifacts, and the
252 spoken language of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of Southampton County; and

253 WHEREAS, the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of Southampton County, Virginia, has an
254 ongoing documented ethno-history in Southampton County, by way of the Archeological Excavation
255 44SN22 that dates to 1580s, and continual relationship with the Commonwealth of Virginia dating back
256 to first ethno-historic contact with the English settlers in 1608; and

257 WHEREAS, the 1983 Session of the General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution No. 54
258 recognizing within the Commonwealth the first six certain name Indian tribes and also acknowledged
259 that members of other Indian Tribes reside within the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

260 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly
261 [~~recognize the existence within the Commonwealth of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of~~
262 ~~Southampton County, Virginia.~~ extend state recognition to the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of
263 Southampton County, Virginia; and, be it

264 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Commonwealth, by this resolution, does not address the question
265 of whether the tribe has been continuously in existence since 1776; and, be it

266 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Commonwealth, by this resolution, does not confirm, confer or
267 address in any manner any issues of sovereignty; and, be it]

268 RESOLVED [~~FURTHER FINALLY~~] , That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of
269 this resolution to Chief Walter "Red Hawk" Brown of the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of
270 Southampton County, Virginia, requesting that he further disseminate copies of this resolution to his
271 constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this
272 matter.

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