



U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
– CHAIRWOMAN MAXINE WATERS –
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2022

Thank you, Chairman Schatz, Vice Chair Murkowski, and Members of the Committee. Today, I am here to discuss an issue I care very deeply about but has been ignored for far too long. Many remain unfamiliar with the history of those who came to be known as the Native American Freedmen, and the ongoing plight of their descendants. The Freedmen were Black individuals who were enslaved by five formerly slave-holding tribal nations and were forced to walk and suffer on the Trail of Tears alongside their slave masters. A year after the Civil War ended, the Five Tribes agreed to abolish slavery and accept Freedmen and their descendants as full tribal citizens under the 1866 treaty agreements they made with the United States government.

Specifically, the 1866 treaties required the Five Tribes to abolish slavery and to agree to treat and accept formerly enslaved individuals and their lineal descendants as equal tribal citizens. For example, the treaty signed by the Cherokee Nation reads, and I quote, “All native born Cherokee, all Indians, and whites legally members of the Nation by adoption, and all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months from the 19th day of July, 1866, and their descendants, who reside within the limits of the Cherokee Nation, shall be taken and deemed to be citizens of the Cherokee Nation.” The four other tribes all signed similar treaties.

Despite the fact that these treaty obligations still exist and are binding on the Five Tribes, beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the tribes began to take formal actions to take away the citizenship rights of descendants of Freedmen. For instance, in 1983, Freedmen were prohibited from voting in Cherokee Nation elections and received letters informing them that their citizenship had been canceled. In 2007, the Cherokee amended their constitution to limit citizenship to only individuals who were “Native American by blood.” These actions led to years of litigation that was finally settled in 2017, when a federal district court judge ruled in favor of the Freedmen and their right to citizenship. In this ruling, the judge stated, and I quote, “In accordance with Article 9 of the 1866 Treaty, the Cherokee Freedmen have a present right to citizenship in the Cherokee Nation that is coextensive with the rights of Native Cherokees.”

Following the court decision, which the Cherokee Nation accepted as binding, the tribe has taken actions to comply with the decision and ensure that descendants of Freedmen are treated as equal citizens. Before my Committee, Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin testified that these actions have made the Cherokee Nation quote “a better nation for having recognized full and equal citizenship of Freedmen descendants.”

Despite the actions of the Cherokee to right the wrong inflicted on its Freedmen, the descendants of Freedmen of the other four tribes continue to be denied tribal citizenship and other basic rights associated with citizenship like equal access to federally funded affordable housing. My Committee even heard testimony last year that Freedmen have even been denied access to life-saving vaccines during the ongoing pandemic. It was this testimony that prompted even the Biden administration to designate all Seminole Freedmen as eligible for health care services, including the COVID vaccine, through the Indian Health Service. However, this decision only applies to Seminole Freedmen, and not Freedmen from the other three tribes.

We know that equal access to housing sits at the heart of many of the racial and economic injustices we continue to see across the country today. As Chairwoman of the House Financial Services Committee, I recognize

that Native communities face some of the worst housing conditions in the United States. It is also important to recognize that the legacy of land and cultural disenfranchisement has created and maintained these circumstances. That is why I proposed providing \$2 billion for affordable housing in tribal communities in my “Housing is Infrastructure Act” and why I am moving to reauthorize NAHASDA with language that ensures that descendants of Freedmen have equal access to these resources, as the 1866 Treaties promised.

When Barney Frank, my predecessor, was Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, he recognized the plight of the Freedmen and was a staunch advocate for their rights. I worked closely with him on legislation to prevent tribes from disenfranchising their descendants. Then as Ranking Member and now as Chairwoman of the Committee, I continue that fight for justice for the descendants of Freedmen.

Currently, there are tribes that are implementing federally funded programs in a way that actively discriminates against descendants of Freedmen in direct violation of treaty obligations. Congress has every right to ensure that federal funding is implemented in compliance with all relevant obligations.

We must stand by the rights promised to Freedmen and the treaties that guaranteed those rights over a century ago and hold these tribes accountable. I’d like to say how proud I am of the descendants of Native Freedmen, who have never wavered in their fight for human dignity and equal recognition, even when it seemed no one would listen. Even with the growing movement for reparations that recognizes the forced and uncompensated labor that built this country, and the riches amassed because of it, it seems that the fight of the descendants of Freedmen still has never been rightfully acknowledged and affirmed.

This pandemic has made clear that the ongoing discrimination of the Freedmen descendants can literally mean the difference between life and death for descendants of Freedmen who have been denied COVID vaccines. So, I urge the distinguished Members of this Committee: We must honor our word as a nation and uphold, as honorable people, the obligations of these treaties. This is as much true for the United States government, which has failed to meet all of its treaty obligations, as it is for the Five Tribes. This work is ongoing, and it is the obligation to the descendants of Freedmen that can’t be left out of that conversation.

I want to thank again Senator Schatz for holding this important hearing and working with me on this issue. And I must indicate that even though there appears to be only one representative here from the Freedmen, I would like, if at all possible, to make sure that the voices of other Freedmen are heard in some sense, in some way. And while I’m pleased that the U.S. Senate is finally hearing testimony from a Freedmen descendant, I must state that hearing from more voices—not less—is the key to productive dialogue. It is when we don’t expand our table to hear more from those who have been disenfranchised that injustices and systemic inequities are perpetuated.

So, moving forward, I am convinced that we can work together to not simply uplift the stories of Freedmen, but also to recognize the shared suffering of Native Freedmen and Native Americans forced to walk that Trail of Tears together and the need to honor the treaties of 1866. I do not believe that the documented history of the descendants of Freedmen can be ignored, forgotten, or dismissed any longer.

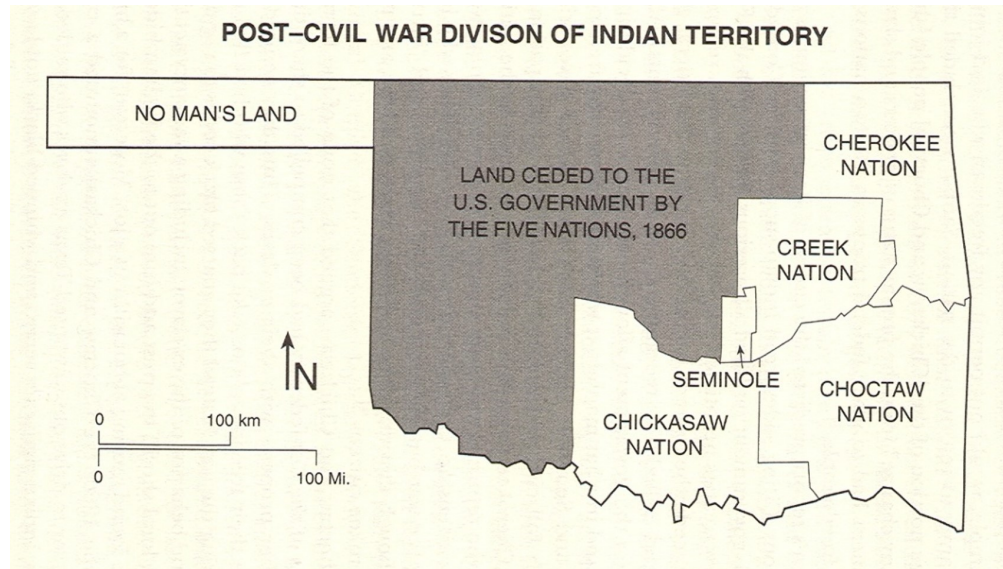
Thank you and I’m happy to take any questions that you may have.

Attachments

1. 1866 U.S. Treaty with the Creek Nation
2. 1866 U.S. Treaty with the Cherokee Nation
3. 1866 U.S. Treaty with the Seminole Nation
4. 1866 U.S. Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations
5. Statement for the Record, Angela Walton-Raji
6. Statement for the Record, Damario Solomon-Simmons
7. Statement for the Record, Terry Ligon
8. Statement for the Record, Sharon Lenzy
9. Statement for the Record, Various Seminole Freedmen
10. Statements for the Record, Freedmen Seminole Band Chief

(1866) U.S. TREATY WITH THE CHEROKEE NATION

PRIMARY DOCUMENT



Post-Civil War division of Indian territory, Oklahoma

Image courtesy *In Search of the Racial Frontier* by Quintard Taylor

(Sections Related to the Freedmen)

July 19, 1866. Ratified July 27, 1866. Proclaimed August 11, 1866

ARTICLE 4.

All the Cherokees and freed persons who were formerly slaves to any Cherokee, and all free negroes not having been such slaves, who resided in the Cherokee Nation prior to June first, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, who may within two years elect not to reside northeast of the Arkansas River and southeast of Grand River, shall have the right to settle in and occupy the Canadian district southwest of the Arkansas River, and also all that tract of country lying northwest of Grand River, and bounded on the southeast by Grand River and west by the Creek reservation to the northeast corner thereof; from thence west on the north line of the Creek reservation to the ninety-sixth degree of west longitude; and thence north on said line of longitude so far that a line due east to Grand River will include a quantity of land equal to one hundred and sixty acres for each person who may so elect to reside in the territory above-described in this article: Provided, That that part of said district north of the Arkansas River shall not be set apart until it shall be found that the Canadian district is not sufficiently large to allow one hundred and sixty acres to each person desiring to obtain settlement under the provisions of this article.

ARTICLE 5.

The inhabitants electing to reside in the district described in the preceding article shall have the right to elect all their local officers and judges, and the number of delegates to which by their numbers they may be entitled in any general council to be established in the Indian Territory under the provisions of this treaty, as stated in Article XII, and to control all their local affairs, and to establish all necessary police regulations and rules for the administration of justice in said district, not inconsistent with the constitution of the Cherokee Nation or the laws of the United States; Provided, The Cherokees residing in said district shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of other Cherokees who may elect to settle in said district as hereinbefore provided, and shall hold the same rights and privileges and be subject to the same liabilities as those who elect to settle in said district under the provisions of this treaty; Provided also, That if any such police regulations or rules be adopted which, in the opinion of the President, bear oppressively on any citizen of the nation, he may suspend the same. And all rules or regulations in said district, or in any other district of the nation, discriminating against the citizens of other districts, are prohibited, and shall be void.

ARTICLE 9.

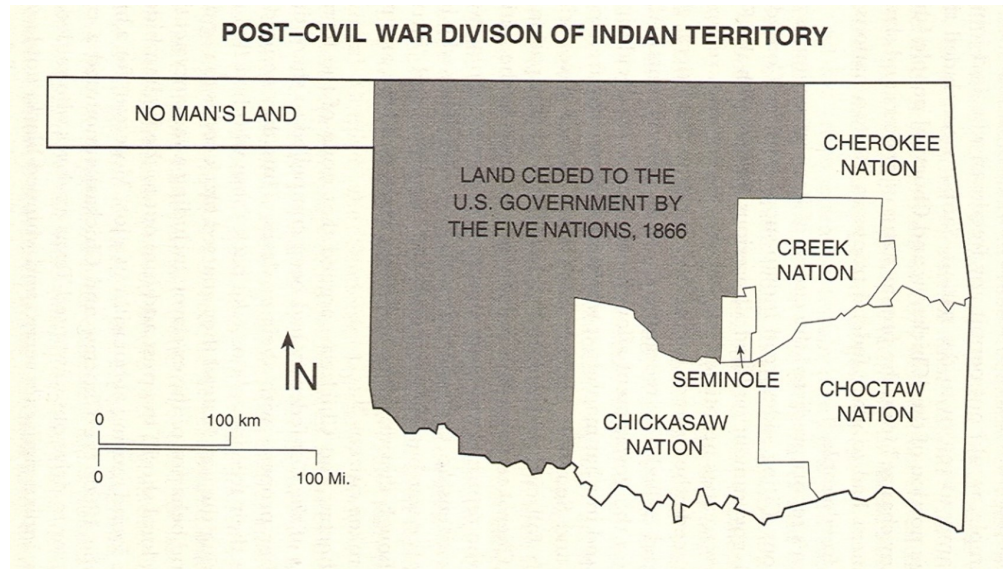
The Cherokee Nation having, voluntarily, in February, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, by an act of the national council, forever abolished slavery, hereby covenant and agree that never hereafter shall either slavery or involuntary servitude exist in their nation otherwise than in the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, in accordance with laws applicable to all the members of said tribe alike. They further agree that all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as all free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months, and their descendants, shall have all the rights of native Cherokees: Provided, That owners of slaves so emancipated in the Cherokee Nation shall never receive any compensation or pay for the slaves so emancipated.

ARTICLE 10.

Every Cherokee and freed person resident in the Cherokee Nation shall have the right to sell any products of his farm, including his or her live stock, or any merchandise or manufactured products, and to ship and drive the same to market without restraint, paying any tax thereon which is now or may be levied by the United States on the quantity sold outside of the Indian Territory.

(1866) U.S. TREATY WITH THE CREEK NATION

PRIMARY DOCUMENT



Post-Civil War division of Indian territory, Oklahoma

Image courtesy *In Search of the Racial Frontier* by Quintard Taylor

June 14, 1866, Ratified July 19, 1866, Proclaimed Aug. 11, 1866

PREAMBLE

Whereas existing treaties between the United States and the Creek Nation have become insufficient to meet their mutual necessities; and whereas the Creeks made a treaty with the so-called Confederate States, on the tenth of July, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, whereby they ignored their allegiance to the United States, and unsettled the treaty relations existing between the Creeks and the United States, and did so render themselves liable to forfeit to the United States all benefits and advantages enjoyed by them in lands, annuities, protection, and immunities, including their lands and other property held by grant or gift from the United States; and whereas in view of said liabilities the United States require of the Creeks a portion of their land whereon to settle other Indians; and whereas a treaty of peace and amity was entered into between the United States and the Creeks and other tribes at Fort Smith, September thirteenth [tenth,] eighteen hundred and sixty-five, whereby the Creeks revoked, cancelled, and repudiated the aforesaid treaty made with the so-called Confederate States; and whereas the United States, through its commissioners, in said treaty of peace and amity, promised to enter into treaty with the Creeks to arrange and settle all questions relating to and growing out of said treaty with the so-called Confederate States: Now, therefore, the United States, by

its commissioners, and the above-named delegates of the Creek Nation, the day and year above mentioned, mutually stipulate and agree, on behalf of the respective parties, as follows, to wit:

ARTICLE 1.

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the parties to this treaty, and the Creeks bind themselves to remain firm allies and friends of the United States, and never to take up arms against the United States, but always faithfully to aid in putting down its enemies. They also agree to remain at peace with all other Indian tribes; and, in return, the United States guarantees them quiet possession of their country, and protection against hostilities on the part of other tribes. In the event of hostilities, the United States agree that the tribe commencing and prosecuting the same shall, as far as may be practicable, make just reparation therefor. To insure this protection, the Creeks agree to a military occupation of their country, at any time, by the United States, and the United States agree to station and continue in said country from time to time, at its own expense, such force as may be necessary for that purpose. A general amnesty of all past offenses against the laws of the United States, committed by any member of the Creek Nation, is hereby declared. And the Creeks, anxious for the restoration of kind and friendly feelings among themselves, do hereby declare an amnesty for all past offenses against their government, and no Indian or Indians shall be proscribed, or any act of forfeiture or confiscation passed against those who have remained friendly to, or taken up arms against, the United States, but they shall enjoy equal privileges with other members of said tribe, and all laws heretofore passed inconsistent herewith are hereby declared inoperative.

ARTICLE 2.

The Creeks hereby covenant and agree that henceforth neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall have been duly convicted in accordance with laws applicable to all members of said tribe, shall ever exist in said nation; and inasmuch as there are among the Creeks many persons of African descent, who have no interest in the soil, it is stipulated that hereafter these persons lawfully residing in said Creek country under their laws and usages, or who have been thus residing in said country, and may return within one year from the ratification of this treaty, and their descendants and such others of the same race as may be permitted by the laws of the said nation to settle within the limits of the jurisdiction of the Creek Nation as citizens [thereof,] shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of native citizens, including an equal interest in the soil and national funds, and the laws of the said nation shall be equally binding upon and give equal protection to all such persons, and all others, of whatsoever race or color, who may be adopted as citizens or members of said tribe.

ARTICLE 3.

In compliance with the desire of the United States to locate other Indians and freedmen thereon, the Creeks hereby cede and convey to the United States, to be sold to and used as homes for such other civilized Indians as the United States may choose to settle thereon, the west half of their entire domain, to be divided by a line running north and south; the eastern half of said Creek lands, being retained by them, shall, except as herein otherwise stipulated, be forever set apart as a home for said Creek Nation; and in consideration of said cession of the west half of their lands, estimated to contain three millions two hundred and fifty thousand five hundred and sixty acres, the United States agree to pay the sum of thirty (30) cents per acre, amounting to nine hundred and seventy-five thousand one hundred and sixty-eight dollars, in the manner hereinafter provided, to wit: two hundred thousand dollars shall be paid per capita in money, unless otherwise directed by the President of the United States, upon the ratification of this treaty, to enable the Creeks to occupy, restore, and improve their farms, and to make their nation independent and self-sustaining, and to pay the damages sustained by the mission schools on the North Fork and the Arkansas Rivers, not to exceed two thousand dollars, and to pay the delegates such per diem as the agent and Creek council may agree upon, as a just and fair compensation, all of which shall be distributed for that purpose by the agent, with the advice of the Creek council, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior. One hundred thousand dollars shall be paid in money and divided to soldiers that enlisted in the Federal Army and the loyal refugee Indians and freedmen who were driven from their homes by the rebel forces, to reimburse them in proportion to their respective losses; four hundred thousand dollars be paid in money and divided per capita to said Creek Nation, unless otherwise directed by the President of the United States, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, as the same may accrue from the sale of land to other Indians. The United States agree to pay to said Indians, in such manner and for such purposes as the Secretary of the Interior may direct, interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum from the date of the ratification of this treaty, on the amount hereinbefore agreed upon for said ceded lands, after deducting the said two hundred thousand dollars; the residue, two hundred and seventy-five thousand one hundred and sixty-eight dollars, shall remain in the Treasury of the United States, and the interest thereon, at the rate of five per centum per annum, be annually paid to said Creeks as above stipulated.

ARTICLE 4.

Immediately after the ratification of this treaty the United States agree to ascertain the amount due the respective soldiers who enlisted in the Federal Army, loyal refugee Indians and freedmen, in proportion to their several losses, and to pay the amount awarded each, in the following manner, to wit: A census of the Creeks shall be taken by the agent of the United States for said nation, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, and a roll of the names of all soldiers that enlisted in the Federal Army, loyal refugee Indians, and freedmen, be made by him. The superintendent of Indian affairs for the Southern superintendency and the agent of the United States for the Creek Nation shall proceed to investigate and determine from said roll the amounts due the respective refugee Indians,

and shall transmit to the Commissioner of Indian affairs for his approval, and that of the Secretary of the Interior, their awards, together with the reasons therefor. In case the awards so made shall be duly approved, said awards shall be paid from the proceeds of the sale of said lands within one year from the ratification of this treaty, or so soon as said amount of one hundred thousand (\$100,000) dollars can be raised from the sale of said land to other Indians.

Note: Signers and Witnesses:

In the presence of—

D. N. Cooley, Commissioner Indian Affairs. [SEAL.]

Elijah Sells, Superintendent Indian Affairs. [SEAL.]

Ok-ta-has Harjo, his x mark. [SEAL.]

Cow Mikko, his x mark. [SEAL.]

Cotch-cho-chee, his x mark. [SEAL.]

D. N. McIntosh. [SEAL.]

James M. C. Smith. [SEAL.]

J. W. Dunn, United States Indian agent.

J. Harlan, United States Indian agent.

Charles E. Mix.

J. M. Tebbetts.

Geo. A. Reynolds, United States Indian agent.

John B. Sanborn.

John F. Brown, Seminole delegate.

John Chupco, his x mark.

Fos-har-jo, his x mark.

Cho-cote-huga, his x mark.

R. Fields, Cherokee delegate.

Douglas H. Cooper.

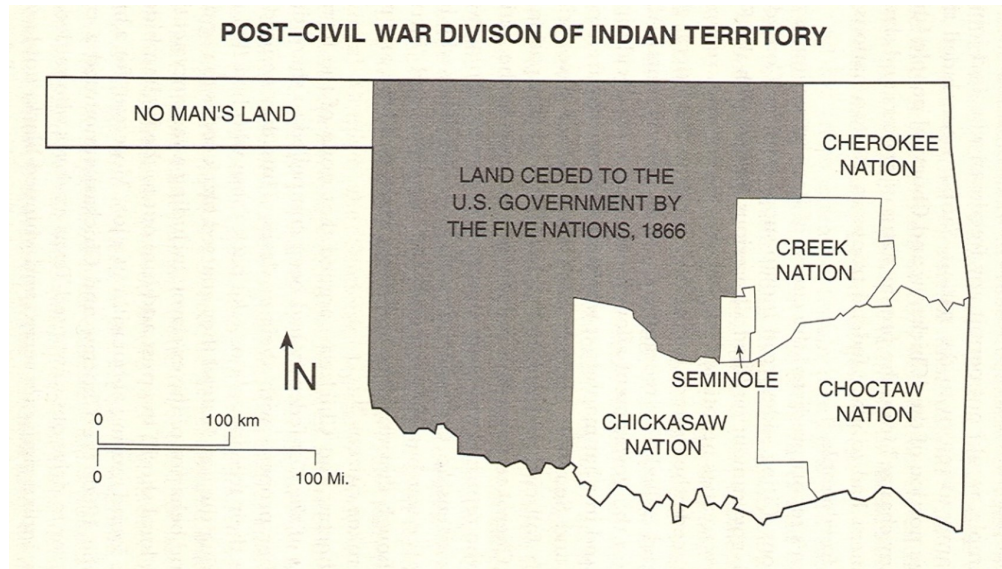
Wm. Penn Adair.

Harry Island, his x mark, United States interpreter, Creek Nation. (Freedman)

Suludin Watie.

(1866) U.S. TREATY WITH THE SEMINOLE NATION

PRIMARY DOCUMENT



Post-Civil War division of Indian territory, Oklahoma

Image courtesy *In Search of the Racial Frontier* by Quintard Taylor

Mar. 21, 1866. Ratified, July 19, 1866. Proclaimed, Aug. 16, 1866.

Whereas existing, treaties between the United States and the Seminole Nation are insufficient to meet their mutual necessities; and

Whereas the Seminole Nation made a treaty with the so-called Confederate States, August 1st, 1861, whereby they threw off their allegiance to the United States, and unsettled their treaty relations with the United States, and thereby incurred the liability of forfeiture of all lands and other property held by grant or gift of the United States; and whereas a treaty of peace and amity was entered into between the United States and the Seminole and other tribes at Fort Smith, September 13 [10,] 1865,a whereby the Seminoles revoked, canceled. and repudiated the said treaty with the so-called Confederate States; and whereas the United States, through its commissioners, in said treaty of peace promised to enter into treaty with the Seminole Nation to arrange and settle all questions relating to and growing out of said treaty with the so-called Confederate States; and whereas the United States, in view of said treaty of the Seminole Nation with the enemies of the Government of the United States, and the consequent liabilities of said Seminole Nation, and in view of its urgent necessities for more lands in the Indian Territory, requires a cession by said Seminole Nation of part of its present reservation, and is willing to pay therefor a reasonable price, while at the same time providing new and adequate land for them:

Now, therefore, the United States, by its commissioners aforesaid, and the above-named delegates of the Seminole Nation, the day and year above written, mutually stipulate and agree, on behalf of the respective parties, as follows, to wit;

ARTICLE 1. There shall be perpetual peace between the United States and the Seminole Nation, and the Seminoles agree to be and remain firm allies of the United States, and always faithfully aid the Government thereof to suppress insurrection and put down its enemies.

The Seminoles also agree to remain at peace with all other Indian tribes and with themselves. In return for these pledges of peace and friendship, the United States guarantee them quiet possession of their country, and protection against hostilities on the part of other tribes; and, in the event of such hostilities, that the tribe commencing and prosecuting the same shall make just reparation therefor. Therefore the Seminoles agree to a military occupation of their country at the option and expense of the United States.

A general amnesty of all past offences against the laws of the United States, committed by any member of the Seminole Nation, is hereby declared; and the Seminoles, anxious for the restoration of kind and friendly feelings among themselves, do hereby declare an amnesty for all past offenses against their government, and no Indian or Indians shall be proscribed or any act of forfeiture or confiscation passed against those who have remained friendly to or taken up arms against the United States, but they shall enjoy equal privileges with other members of said tribe, and all laws heretofore passed inconsistent herewith are hereby declared inoperative.

ARTICLE 2. The Seminole Nation covenant that henceforth in said nation slavery shall not exist, nor involuntary servitude, except for and in punishment of crime, whereof the offending party shall first have been duly convicted in accordance with law, applicable to all the members of said nation. And inasmuch as there are among the Seminoles many persons of African descent and blood, who have no interest or property in the soil, and no recognized civil rights it is stipulated that hereafter these persons and their descendants, and such other of the same race as shall be permitted by said nation to settle there, shall have and enjoy all the rights of native citizens, and the laws of said nation shall be equally binding upon all persons of whatever race or color, who may be adopted as citizens or members of said tribe.

ARTICLE 3. In compliance with the desire of the United States to locate other Indians and freedmen thereon, the Seminoles cede and convey to the United States their entire domain, being the tract of land ceded to the Seminole Indians by the Creek Nation under the provisions of article first, (1st,) treaty of the United States with the Creeks and Seminoles, made and concluded at Washington, D. C., August 7, 1856. In consideration of said grant and cession of their lands, estimated at two million one hundred and sixty-nine thousand and eighty (2,169,080) acres, the United States agree to pay said

Seminole Nation the sum of three hundred and twenty-five thousand three hundred and sixty-two (\$325,362) dollars, said purchase being at the rate of fifteen cents per acre. The United States having obtained by grant of the Creek Nation the westerly half of their lands, hereby grant to the Seminole Nation the portion thereof hereafter described, which shall constitute the national domain of the Seminole Indians. Said lands so granted by the United States to the Seminole Nation are bounded and described as follows, to wit: Beginning on the Canadian River where the line dividing the Creek lands according to the terms of their sale to the United States by their treaty of February 6, 1866, a following said line due north to where said line crosses the north fork of the Canadian River; thence up said north fork of the Canadian River a distance sufficient to make two hundred thousand acres by running due south to the Canadian River; thence down said Canadian River to the place of beginning. In consideration of said cession of two hundred thousand acres of land described above, the Seminole Nation agrees to pay therefor the price of fifty cents per acre, amounting to the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, which amount shall be deducted from the sum paid by the United States for Seminole lands under the stipulations above written. The balance due the Seminole Nation after making said deduction, amounting to one hundred thousand dollars, the United States agree to pay in the following manner, to wit: Thirty thousand dollars shall be paid to enable the Seminoles to occupy, restore, and improve their farms, and to make their nation independent and self-sustaining, and shall be distributed for that purpose under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior; twenty thousand dollars shall be paid in like manner for the purpose of purchasing agricultural implements, seeds, cows, and other stock; fifteen thousand dollars shall be paid for the erection of a mill suitable to accommodate said nation of Indians; seventy thousand dollars to remain in the United States Treasury, upon which the United States shall pay an annual interest of five per cent.; fifty thousand of said sum of seventy thousand dollars shall be a permanent school-fund, the interest of which shall be paid annually and appropriated to the support of schools; the remainder of the seventy thousand dollars, being twenty thousand dollars, shall remain a permanent fund, the interest of which shall be paid annually for the support of the Seminole government; forty thousand three hundred and sixty-two dollars shall be appropriated and expended for subsisting said Indians, discriminating in favor of the destitute; all of which amounts, excepting the seventy thousand dollars to remain in the Treasury as a permanent fund, shall be paid upon the ratification of said treaty, and disbursed in such manner as the Secretary of the Interior may direct. The balance, fifty thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the losses ascertained and awarded as hereinafter provided, shall be paid when said awards shall have been duly made and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. And in case said fifty thousand dollars shall be insufficient to pay all said awards, it shall be distributed pro rata to those whose claims are so allowed; and until said awards shall be thus paid, the United States agree to pay to said Indians, in such manner and for such purposes as the Secretary of the Interior may direct, interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum from the date of the ratification of this treaty.

ARTICLE 4. To reimburse such members of the Seminole Nation as shall be duly adjudged to have remained loyal and faithful to their treaty relations to the United States, during the recent rebellion of the so-called Confederate States for the losses actually sustained by them thereby, after the ratification of this treaty, or so soon thereafter as the Secretary of the Interior shall direct, he shall appoint a board of commissioners, not to exceed three in number, who shall proceed to the Seminole country and investigate and determine said losses. Previous to said investigation the agent of the Seminole Nation shall prepare a census or enumeration of said tribe, and make a roll of all Seminoles who did in no manner aid or abet the enemies of the Government, but remained loyal during said rebellion; and no award shall be made by said commissioners for such losses unless the name of the claimant appear on said roll, and no compensation shall be allowed any person for such losses whose name does not appear on said roll, unless said claimant, within six months from the date of the completion of said roll, furnishes proof satisfactory to said board, or to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that he has at all times remained loyal to the United States, according to his treaty obligations. All evidence touching said claims shall be taken by said commissioners, or any of them, under oath, and their awards made, together with the evidence, shall be transmitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for his approval, and that of the Secretary of the Interior. Said commissioners shall be paid by the United States such compensation as the Secretary of the Interior may direct. The provisions of this article shall extend to and embrace the claims for losses sustained by loyal members of said tribe, irrespective of race or color, whether at the time of said losses the claimants shall have been in servitude or not; provided said claimants are made members of said tribe by the stipulations of this treaty.

ARTICLE 5. The Seminole Nation hereby grant a right of way through their lands to any company which shall be duly authorized by Congress, and shall, with the express consent and approbation of the Secretary of the Interior, undertake to construct a railroad from any point on their eastern to their western or southern boundary; but said railroad company, together with all its agents and employees, shall be subject to the laws of the United States relating to the intercourse with Indian tribes, and also to such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior for that purpose. And the Seminoles agree to sell to the United States, or any company duly authorized as aforesaid, such lands, not legally owned or occupied by a member or members of the Seminole Nation lying along the line of said contemplated railroad, not exceeding on each side thereof a belt or strip of land three miles in width, at such price per acre as may be eventually agreed upon between said Seminole Nation and the party or parties building said road—subject to the approval of the President of the United States: Provided, however, That said land thus sold shall not be reconveyed, leased, or rented to, or be occupied by, any one not a citizen of the Seminole Nation, according to its laws and recognized usages: Provided also, That officers, servants, and employés of said railroad necessary to its construction and management shall not be excluded from such necessary occupancy, they being subject to the provisions of the Indian-intercourse laws, and such rules and regulations as may be established by the Secretary of the Interior; nor shall any conveyance of said lands be made to the

party building and managing said road, until its completion as a first-class railroad and its acceptance as such by the Secretary of the Interior.

Robert Johnson, his x mark. <—--(Freedman)

United States interpreter for Seminole Indians.

Geo. A. Reynolds, United States Indian agent for Seminoles.

Ok-tus-sus-har-jo, his x mark, or Sands.

Cow-e-to-me-ko, his x mark.

Che-chu-chee, his x mark.

Harry Island, his x mark. <—--(Freedman)

United States interpreter for Creek Indians.

J. W. Dunn, United States Indian agent for the Creek Nation.

Perry Fuller.

Signed by John F. Brown, special delegate for the Southern Seminoles, in presence of, this June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and sixty-six—

W.R. Irwin.

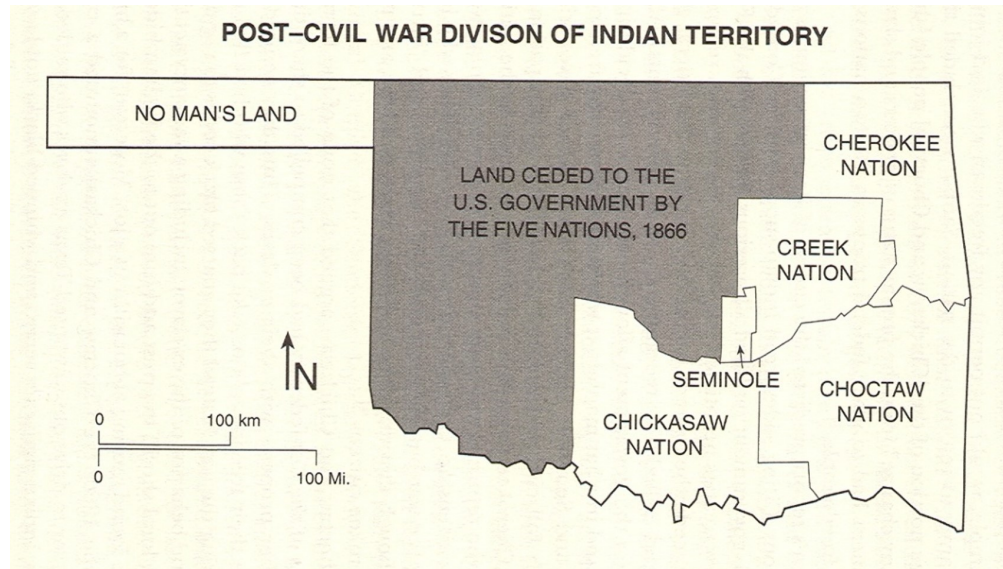
J. M. Tebbetts.

Geo. A. Reynolds, United States Indian agent.

Robert Johnson, his x mark, United States interpreter.

(1866) U.S. TREATY WITH THE CHOCTAW & CHICKASAW NATIONS

PRIMARY DOCUMENT



Post-Civil War division of Indian territory, Oklahoma

Image courtesy *In Search of the Racial Frontier* by Quintard Taylor

Articles of agreement and convention between the United States and the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations of Indians, made and concluded at the City of Washington the twenty-eighth day of April, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-six, by Dennis N. Cooley, Elijah Sells, and E S. Parker, special commissioners on the part of the United States, and Alfred Wade, Allen Wright, James Riley, and John Page, commissioners on the part of the Choctaws, and Winchester Colbert, Edmund Pickens, Holmes Colbert, Colbert Carter, and Robert H. Love, commissioners on the part of the Chickasaws.

ARTICLE 1. Permanent peace and friendship are hereby established between the United States and said nations; and the Choctaws and Chickasaws do hereby bind themselves respectively to use their influence and to make every exertion to induce Indians of the plains to maintain peaceful relations with each other, with other Indians, and with the United States.

ARTICLE 2. The Choctaws and Chickasaws hereby covenant and agree that henceforth neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, otherwise than in punishment of crime whereof the parties shall have been duly convicted, in accordance with laws applicable to all members of the particular nation, shall ever exist in said nations.

ARTICLE 3. The Choctaws and Chickasaws, in consideration of the sum of three hundred thousand dollars, hereby cede to the United States the territory west of the 98 deg. west longitude, known as the

leased district, provided that the said sum shall be invested and held by the United States, at an interest not less than five per cent, in trust for the said nations, until the legislatures of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations respectively shall have made such laws, rules, and regulations as may be necessary to give all persons of African descent, resident in the said nation at the date of the treaty of Fort Smith, and their descendants, heretofore held in slavery among said nations, all the rights, privileges, and immunities, including the right of suffrage, of citizens of said nations, except in the annuities, moneys, and public domain claimed by, or belonging to, said nations respectively; and also to give to such persons who were residents as aforesaid, and their descendants, forty acres each of the land of said nations on the same terms as the Choctaws and Chickasaws, to be selected on the survey of said land, after the Choctaws and Chickasaws and Kansas Indians have made their selections as herein provided; and immediately on the enactment of such laws, rules, and regulations, the said sum, of three hundred thousand dollars shall be paid to the said Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations in the proportion of three-fourths to the former and one-fourth to the latter, -less such sum, at the rate of one hundred dollars per capita, as shall be sufficient to pay such persons of African descent before referred to as within ninety days after the passage of such laws, rules, and regulations shall elect to remove and actually remove from the said nations respectively. And should the said laws, rules, and regulations not be made by the legislatures of the said nations respectively, within two years from the ratification of this treaty, then the said sum of three hundred thousand dollars shall cease to be held in trust for the said Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, and be held for the use and benefit of such of said persons of African descent as the United States shall remove from the said Territory in such manner as the United States shall deem proper, the United States agreeing, within ninety days from the expiration of the said two years, to remove from said nations all such persons of African descent as may be willing to remove; those remaining or returning after having been removed from said nations to have no benefit of said sum of three hundred thousand dollars, or any part thereof, but shall be upon the same footing as other citizens of the United States in the said nations.

ARTICLE 4. The said nations further agree that all negroes, not otherwise disqualified or disabled, shall be competent witnesses in all civil and criminal suits and proceedings in the Choctaw and Chickasaw courts, any law to the contrary notwithstanding; and they fully recognize the right of the freedmen to a fair remuneration-on reasonable and equitable contracts for their labor, which the law should aid them to enforce. And they agree, on the part of their respective nations, that all laws shall be equal in their operation upon Choctaws, Chickasaws, and negroes, and that no distinction affecting the latter shall at any time be made, and that they shall be treated with kindness and be protected against injury; and they further agree, that while the said freedmen, now in the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, remain in said nations, respectively, they shall be entitled to as much land as they may cultivate for the support of themselves and families, in cases where they do not support themselves and families by hiring, not interfering with existing improvements without the consent of

Conditions of Choctaw & Chickasaw Freedmen Descendants

Angela Y. Walton-Raji, Author, Historian, Freedman Descendant

July 14, 2021

To the Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development and Insurance:

As a Choctaw Freedman Descendant with family and associates in eastern Oklahoma particularly the Choctaw Nation, it is a disappointment and a heartbreaking feeling to watch how today after over a century, the descendants of those who were classified as “Freedmen” are seemingly punished for having ancestors who were enslaved in the Choctaw Nation.

Historic Background

When the treaty was signed in 1866, and slavery was finally abolished, the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations signed the same exact treaty. It was stated in that treaty that those enslaved were to be released from bondage and given citizenship in the land and nation that they had come to know for generations.

The 1866 treaty is the same treaty that the United States Supreme Court recently ruled in *McGirt* ruling, that is still intact. Article 3 of that treaty addressed the issue of Freedmen, yet, when the Chickasaws, broke the treaty, refusing to grant citizenship to their former slaves, Congress did not intervene. Choctaws took 19 years before citizenship was granted in 1885. And during those 19 years, Congress did not intervene.

Almost 100 years later, the Choctaw Nation wrote a new constitution revising their policy for citizenship in 1983. The Choctaw Nation embraced the establishment of using CDIB cards, and relying on the Dawes Roll as an obstacle for Freedmen descendants---aka African Choctaws to intentionally eliminate them from eligibility for citizenship. Yet, Choctaw Freedmen identified with their nation but this policy was an effort to erase their identity from not only the Choctaw community, but from Choctaw history.

For historical reference please note that the tribe was given \$300,000 by the Federal government to be put in use for the Freedmen. The tribe accepted the money, but none was used for the Freedmen.

Dawes Roll Process

When the enrollment process first ended in 1906 there were 20,766 Freedmen from all 5 tribes. Choctaw Freedmen numbered 5,254 and Chickasaw freedmen 4,995 respectively, and that is over 10,000 people from those two tribal nations.

During the years Freedmen lived under the laws of the nations, and considered themselves to be part of the community and culture that had become theirs. While Chickasaws kept their former

slaves in darkness, the Choctaw Nation did establish and support schools, and even funded, the only tribally funded boarding school, Tushka Lusa Institute, in Tali-hina Oklahoma.

But the Dawes allotment process for both Choctaw and Chickasaw Freedmen put the former slaves at an immediate disadvantage. They were allotted 40 acres of land. **HOWEVER**---their neighbors classified as Choctaws by Blood---and Inter-Married whites were allotted 320 acres of land. **Eight times more land was allotted to those who had no African blood.** This means that Choctaw and Chickasaw Freedmen were given 1/8th of the opportunity to establish generational prosperity than Choctaws by Blood, and whites who had married into the tribe.

When the tribes were able to re-organize in the 20th century, descendants of those Choctaw Freedmen and Chickasaw Freedmen began to apply for citizenship once again in the nation they considered to be theirs. But they found that the tribes had embraced the late 20th century process of “measuring blood” which is a very clever and racist method of analyzing race, by using a flawed roll, to exclude the descendants of their former slaves.

Selective Use of the Dawes Roll to Exclude Freedmen

The Dawes Roll itself is a 635 page document. All Choctaws are documented on pages 1-154. Within those 154 pages, Freedmen are documented on pages 117-154. What they do not say is that if your ancestors are on pages 117-154---then you need not apply, because you will not be given citizenship.

Likewise, Chickasaws are on the Dawes Roll. They are on pages 167-237. But again, if your ancestors are on pages 209-237, then citizenship is not extended to you, because your blood does not matter.

The rationale is that Freedmen have no blood ties to their slave owners. But in the early 1900s, about 2000 Chickasaw Freedmen launched a suit to be placed on the blood roll, because they had been fathered by Chickasaw men. But again their blood did not matter; the blood was never recorded for them or for Choctaw Freedmen with Indian fathers.

Critical Need for Congressional Action to Correct This Policy

Having an ancestor who was impregnated by a slave holding master should NOT be a criteria for citizenship in any of the Federally recognized tribes. Giving Federal funds supporting such a heinous policy, is equivalent to Congress agreeing to an ongoing punishment for descendants of slaves, for having an ancestor unfortunate enough to have been legally “owned” by another.

For years, the Department of the Interior has been the vehicle to oversee this policy. The tribes are then allowed to simply shrug and say “we have to do this, the Bureau of Indian Affairs requires it,” making the Department of the Interior, and Congress complicit in this racist policy.

This practice should not be the intention, nor goal, of anything that the United States government stands for. Likewise, Congress should not fund such an entity that practices this policy, with Federal taxpayer’s money.

Our Request to You

The descendants of Choctaw and Chickasaw Freedmen request a remedy to this policy negating our history, our legacy, our humanity. We are truly a part of the nation into which our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents have been a part for over 200 years.

The difference is that our ancestors were enslaved, and both Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations have become comfortable with the “old south” racist method of excluding the descendants of the people their ancestors enslaved, for the simple reason of color racial bias and a belief in superiority of one people over another. This racially based policy of exclusion is making hundreds of thousands of tax-paying Freedman descendants of these two tribes, to pay for their own exclusion

On behalf of Choctaw and Chickasaw Freedmen, we claim our identity and ask that this committee address this wrong and not allow it to continue.



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Written Statement of

Damario Solomon Simmons, Esq., M.Ed.
Managing Partner of **SolomonSimmonsLaw**, General Counsel **Muscogee Creek Indian
Freedmen Band, Inc.**, and direct descendant of Muscogee Creek Chief Coweta Micco a/k/a
Cow Tom

Before the U.S. House of Representatives: Financial Services Committee

Subcommittee on the Housing, Community Development, and Insurance
Hearing on NAHASDA Reauthorization Addressing Historic Disinvestment and the Ongoing
Plight of the Freedmen in Native American Communities

Tuesday July 27, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Article II of the Creek Treaty of 1866 between the United States and the Muskogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma (hereinafter referred to as “MCN”), the Freedmen and Freedmen Descendants, regardless of their “blood” status, “shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of native citizens” of the MCN. *Creek Treaty of 1866, Art. 2, June 14, 1866, 14 Stat. 785, 1866 WL 18777* (hereinafter “Treaty of 1866”). However, since 1979 MCN has perpetuated race-based discrimination and the badges of slavery by using me, my clients’ and other Creek Freedmen Descendants’ African ancestry to deny them the rights and benefits of MCN citizenship. MCN has excluded Creek Freedmen and their Descendants from the rights guaranteed by the Treaty of 1866, including, but not limited to, the rights of citizenship, to vote, to hold office, and to be recognized for who they are: MCN citizens by birthright, heritage, history, and culture.

This is why Creek Freedmen desperately need this Committee to support legislation and executive action that severs the U.S. Government’s relations with MCN until MCN restores full citizenship rights to Creek Freedmen as required by Article II of the MCN Treaty of 1866. Specifically, I ask this honorable committee to support Congresswoman Maxine Waters’ (D-CA) language that would prevent MCN from receiving any benefits from the 2021-2022 NAHASDA Reauthorization until Black Creek Indians/Freedmen citizenship rights are fully and completely restored by MCN.

HISTORY OF MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION AND THE CREEK FREEDMEN

For at least four centuries, the MCN included people of different “races,” skin color, and national origins among its citizens. Only recently has the MCN perpetrated a policy of exclusion based upon race. Historically, the MCN comprised a confederacy of separate towns, tribes, and peoples throughout what is now the southeastern United States.¹

As European colonists and eventually white non-indigenous Americans began to inhabit this area, they sought to “civilize the Creek Indian.” In the ensuing decades, the United States continuously and repeatedly attempted to impose, often by force, its customs, economy, religion, and political structure on indigenous groups such as the MCN. One American custom adopted by *some* Creek citizens was the plantation economy and the reliance on chattel African slavery as a labor force.

Along with enslaved Africans who were owned by MCN citizens, there were also MCN citizens of African descent and free Blacks openly living as citizens of the MCN. All these segments of MCN society were forcibly removed pursuant to the Indian Removal Act of 1830, when the United States expelled the MCN from their traditional homelands and sent them along the infamous Trail of Tears to live in Indian Territory, in what is now Oklahoma.

¹ Among those peoples were the Yamassee or Jamassi who were reported to have been “immigrants from Africa prior to the European discovery of America.” See, *United States Department of Interior Census Office, Extra Census Bulletin, Washington, D.C.: United States Census Printing Office (1894)*, p. 27.

The Creeks were removed primarily by their traditional tribal “town,” and it was the town “Micos” or chiefs who kept the tribal rolls. This allowed the MCN citizens who made it to Oklahoma to re-establish their towns. Removal was carried out by the U.S. military, and approximately 24,000 MCN citizens were forced to travel to Indian Territory by foot or riverboats. Due to poor planning, organization, and indifference by the U.S. Government, thousands of MCN citizens died on the way to Indian Territory due to exposure, starvation, and disease. Even after removal to Indian Territory, some MCN citizens continued to hold slaves until the Creek Treaty of 1866 abolished slavery in the Creek Nation.

THE CIVIL WAR AND THE TREATY OF 1866

In 1861, Union forces withdrew from Indian Territory, and Confederate officials formally occupied Indian Territory. Some Creeks, known as the “Lower/Southern Creeks,” who had been more willing to adopt the plantation economy and other European customs, provided supplies, men, and support to the Confederacy, and even sent representatives to the Confederate Congress. Other Creeks, known as the “Upper/Loyal Creeks,” who generally resisted cultural assimilation, provided supplies, men, and support for the Union.

A contingent of Loyal Creeks, which included a substantial “Black” Creek component, left their homes for Kansas to flee from Lower/Southern Creek soldiers and their Confederate allies. The Battle of Honey Springs Creek was a major battle that occurred in Indian Territory during the Civil War, and Upper/Loyal Creeks, including “Black” Creeks, valiantly fought against the Confederacy and their allies. In 1865, after the Civil War ended, President Andrew Johnson designated a commission to travel to Fort Smith, Arkansas, to convene a council for the purpose of negotiating new treaties with the Creeks and the other four tribes making up the so-called “Five Civilized Tribes”: the Seminoles, Cherokees, Choctaws, and Chickasaws.

The members of that commission declared that a treaty between each tribe and the United States “must” contain certain stipulations, including that “[t]he institution of slavery, which has existed among several of the tribes, must be forthwith abolished, and measures taken for the unconditional emancipation of all persons held in bondage, and for their incorporation into the tribes on an equal footing with the original members, or suitably provided for.” D.N. COOLEY, SOUTHERN SUPERINTENDENCE 296, 298. (Oct. 30, 1865).

In an exercise of its sovereignty, the MCN negotiated and executed the Treaty of 1866² with the United States. That treaty became the foundational legal document of the Creek Nation and established the modern MCN as it is known today. The treaty provides in pertinent part:

[I]nasmuch as there are among the Creek many persons of African descent...it is stipulated that hereafter these persons, lawfully residing in said Creek country, under their laws and usages, or who have been thus residing in said country, and may return within one year from the ratification of this treaty, and their descendants and such others of the same race as may be permitted by the laws of said

² My paternal great-great-great-grandfather, Coweta Micco (a/k/a Cow Tom) was one of only five (5) Creek Citizens to negotiate and sign the Treaty of 1866.

Nation to settle within the limits of the jurisdiction of the Creek Nation as citizens [thereof], shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of native citizens, including an equal interest in the soil and national funds; and the laws of said Nation shall be equally binding upon and give equal protection to all such persons. . . .

Treaty of 1866, Art. II.

Functionally, identical clauses outlawing slavery and granting full citizenship to those formally enslaved persons also appear in the treaties that the Seminole, Cherokee, and Choctaw Nations executed with the United States in 1866.

MCN POST-CIVIL WAR AND PRE-DAWES ROLLS ENROLLMENT

Shortly after executing the Treaty of 1866, the MCN reorganized their government constitutional structure; and, in 1867, the MCN created a new and expansive constitution (“1867 Constitution”).

The 1867 MCN Constitution did not discriminate against Creeks of African descent, Free Africans, or Creek Freedmen citizens of MCN. In fact, Article I, Sec. 1, 2, and 3 of the 1867 Constitution authorized each *etv/wv* (town) to elect a member to the House of Kings and House of Warriors.³ The towns in existence at that time included three African Creek towns – Arkansas Colored, North Fork Colored, and Canadian Colored.

Between 1867 and 1895, the MCN created numerous rolls of its citizens. None of these rolls created by the MCN contained or listed any blood quantum, or singled out Creeks of African descent, “Free African” MCN citizens, or formerly-enslaved Africans who were emancipated and accepted as Creek citizens pursuant to the Treaty of 1866. Between 1866 and 1906, Creeks of African descent were an essential part of the MCN community, as evidenced by their service in important and high positions in MCN government, and other areas of MCN life, including Creek citizens like Sugar George, Judge Henry Reed, Harry Island, and Warrior Rentie.

THE DAWES ROLLS

In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Act of 1887 (“Dawes Act”). The stated purpose of the Dawes Act was to prepare Indian Territory for statehood and white settlement. To this end, the Dawes Act authorized the transfer of most of the land owned corporately by the so-called Five Civilized Tribes (the Creek, Cherokee, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations) to individual tribal citizens. Implicit in this allocation policy was an effort to eliminate the tribes’ ability to self-govern. After the Dawes Act had been enacted, Congress created the Dawes Commission in 1893 and tasked it with identifying all MCN citizens who were eligible for land allotment in what would come to be known as the Dawes Roll.

³ Under MCN’s bicameral legislature the House of Kings and House of Warrior were equivalent to the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Five years after the creation of the Dawes Commission, Congress passed the Curtis Act of June 28, 1898, 30 Stat. 495, (“Curtis Act”), directing the commission to create two lists of citizens of the Creek Nation who would be eligible for land allotment: (1) the “Creek Nation Creek Roll,” which was purportedly only composed of Creek citizens with Creek blood; and (2) the “Creek Nation Freedmen Roll,” which was purportedly only a roll of those citizens of the Creek Nation who were formerly enslaved Africans and devoid of any Creek blood.⁴ The Dawes Commission, motivated by racism and white supremacy, used race and MCN citizens’ physical appearance to segregate Creeks of African Descent, i.e. “Creek Freedmen.” The “true” Creeks, in the Dawes Commission’s estimation, were listed on the Creek Roll, also known as the Blood Roll; the Creek Freedmen (i.e. individuals of African descent, regardless of whether they or their ancestors were previously enslaved in the MCN) were listed on the Creek Freedmen Roll.

The Dawes Commission employed the hypo-descent rule, by which any individual with “one drop” of “Black blood” was to be considered Black and, therefore, belonged on the Freedmen Roll. The Dawes Commission, therefore, enrolled many Creeks of African descent on the Freedmen Roll, regardless of whether they or their ancestors were ever enslaved in the MCN or how much “Creek blood” they possessed.⁵ Therefore, once the Dawes Rolls closed on March 4, 1907, Creek citizens enrolled on the Freedmen Roll and their descendants, in perpetuity, would always carry the ugly badge of slavery, regardless of whether the enrollee or their ancestors were ever enslaved.

EXPULSION OF CREEK FREEDMEN AND DIVESTURE OF CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS

On or about August 18, 1975, the MCN, through its National Council, submitted to the United States Department of the Interior (“DOI”) a draft constitution (“Draft Constitution”) that, among other things, contained express provisions which: (1) stripped individuals on the 1906 Creek Freedmen Rolls and their then-living lineal descendants of their MCN citizenship; and (2) prevented the unborn lineal descendants of individuals who were enrolled on the 1906 Creek Freedmen Rolls from becoming citizens of MCN. Before the MCN submitted the Draft Constitution to DOI, the MCN did not seek, obtain, or allow any input from Creek Freedmen or individuals representing Creek Freedmen’s interests.

On October 29, 1977, then-MCN Principal Chief Claud Cox, a proponent of the new constitution, admitted that one of the express goals of the Draft Constitution was to strip Freedmen and Creek Freedmen Descendants of their MCN citizenship and rights, stating:

When you go back to the old [1867] Constitution, you are licked before you start; because it doesn’t talk about Indians, it talks about CITIZENS of the CREEK NATION. When you got down to the Allotment time, there were more that was non-Indians or half-blood or less, who outnumbered the full blood, all of these totaled about 11,000, and there were only 18,000 on the entire Roll; so there was only 9,000 above One-half blood. That’s the reason,

⁴See, Felix S. Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, 431 (1982).

⁵“[I]n cases of mixed freedmen and Indian parents, which was common among the Creeks . . . the applicant was always enrolled as a ‘freedmen’.” Kent Carter, *The Dawes Commission and the Allotment of the Five Civilized Tribes 1893–1914* (1999). Dawes Commission personnel were instructed to look for and/or inquire if a MCN citizen had any African ancestry, and to place that individual on the so-called Freedmen roll. *Id.*

they lost control; the FULLBLOOD lost control. That's what we're fighting, this blood quantum, trying to get back and let the people control because under the old Constitution, you've lost before you ever started. There were three FREEDMAN bands that would outnumber you today as citizens. So, if we want to keep the INDIAN in control, we've got to take a good look at this thing and get us a Constitution that will keep the Creek Indian in Control.⁶

On August 17, 1979, DOI approved the new MCN constitution for MCN referendum ("1979 Constitution"). On October 6, 1979, the MCN held an election to formally adopt the 1979 Constitution and replace the 1867 Constitution. Section 503 of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 5203, in effect in 1979, required the participation of at least 30% of "those entitled" to vote, or the results of the election would be invalid. The total number of "entitled voters" that MCN officials identified prior to the 1979 constitutional referendum did not include Creek Freedmen or Creek Freedmen Descendants, in an apparent effort to meet OIWA election requirements. Creek Freedmen and their Descendants were denied the right to vote on the 1979 Constitution and did not cast votes.

Upon the dubious ratification of the 1979 Constitution, and with DOI's approval, the MCN illegally declared that all Freedmen were not entitled to MCN citizenship and would no longer be recognized or allowed to be citizens of MCN. The MCN also began to summarily deny Creek Freedmen and their Descendants applications for citizenship. As a result, thousands of Creek citizens—including my clients, whose ancestors' names appeared on the Creek Freedmen Roll—were stripped of their legal rights and cultural identity. Creek Freedmen Descendants have been denied their MCN citizenship rights as the MCN has implemented statutes and policies under the illegal 1979 Constitution and in violation of the Treaty of 1866.

From 1979 through the present, eligible Freedmen and Creek Freedmen Descendants who have applied for MCN citizenships and have been summarily denied. Often, Freedmen applicants are informed of their denial via a form letter from the Citizenship Board, which includes some version of the following language, taken from a May 31, 2002, letter from MCN to a Creek Freedmen applicant:

We are returning your letter and any other documents submitted for enrollment into the Muscogee (Creek) Nation because in checking the Dawes Commission Rolls, your ancestors were enrolled on the Creek Freedmen Rolls. If you will note from the copy you submitted there is no blood quantum listed because they are not Creek by Blood. When slavery was abolished following the Civil War, Treaties were negotiated with the Five-Civilized Tribes; the Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole Nations. The treaties conferred citizenship in the tribes on the negroes who had been held in slavery by the tribes. Such citizens were referred to as 'Freedmen.'⁷

⁶ MCN National Council Minutes, October 29, 1977 at 31.

⁷See, letter dated May 31, 2002, from MCN to Creek Freedmen Applicant on file with undersigned.

CREEK FREEDMEN’S UNSUCCESSFUL LITIGATION HISTORY

In 2004, on behalf of two Freedmen Descendants, Fred Johnson “(Johnson)” and Ron Graham (“Graham”), I litigated the issue of Freedmen’s and Freedmen Descendants’ citizenship within the MCN court in *Johnson and Graham v. Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma Citizenship Board*, CV 2003-54. The MCN Citizenship Board (“Citizenship Board”), which was created after ratification of the unlawful 1979 Constitution, repeatedly denied Johnson’s and Graham’s citizenship applications between 1983 and 2003.

I appealed the Citizenship Board’s administrative decisions against Johnson and Graham to the MCN District Court, alleging arbitrary and capricious decision-making and abuses of discretion by the Citizenship Board. Johnson and Graham contended that they and all Freedmen were eligible for citizenship in MCN, pursuant to the Treaty of 1866, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Constitution, and the MCN Citizenship Code. A bench trial on the merits was held over seven days between August 28, 2005, and September 14, 2005. During the trial, we introduced hundreds of exhibits and took the live testimony of approximately 12 witnesses, including the foremost Creek Freedmen academic, Dr. Daniel Littlefield.

In its March 27, 2006 opinion, the MCN District Court **declined** to rule on or even discuss the substantive issues directly related to the Treaty of 1866 and the validity of the 1979 Constitution. Instead, the MCN District Court found the Citizenship Board did not follow MCN law that mandated Johnson, Graham, and other Descendants to have their citizenship applications processed. On or about April 13, 2006, the Citizenship Board refused to comply with the MCN District Court’s order to process Johnson’s and Graham’s citizenship applications. On November 2, 2007, the MCN Supreme Court unanimously reversed the MCN District Court decision and similarly **refused** to rule on the applicability of the citizenship provisions of the Treaty of 1866.

After more than ten (10) years of trying to work with the elected officials of MCN without any results, in July 2018, I filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of D.C. against the MCN and DOI on behalf of the Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band (“Band”) and a handful of individual Creek Freedmen⁸ for the MCN’s denial of citizenship on account of their race and the DOI’s breach of its fiduciary duty to protect the citizenship rights of the Creek Freedmen, including, without limitation, their rights to vote and to run for office. In June 2019, despite our arguments that exhausting tribal remedies would be futile, the court dismissed the lawsuit without prejudice, pending the exhaustion of remedies in tribal court. Accordingly, when two of our clients’ applications for citizenship with MCN were denied in July and October 2019, respectively, each filed administrative appeals with the MCN, which were also denied.

⁸ The named plaintiffs included: Rhonda K. Grayson (“Grayson”) is a direct lineal descendant of America Cohee-Webster Dawes Roll #4661, Sharon Lenzy-Scott (“Lenzy-Scott”) is a direct lineal descendant of Jackson Perryman Dawes Roll #3635, Jeffrey D. Kennedy (“Kennedy”) is a direct lineal descendant of Ben Grayson, Dawes Roll #5329, and Johnnie Mae Austin (“Austin”) is a direct lineal descendant of John W. Simmons, Dawes Roll #645.

In March 2020, I filed a petition in the MCN District Court on behalf of our Creek Freedmen clients, alleging that the MCN Citizenship Board violated the U.S. Constitution; the Principal Chiefs Act of 1970; the Indian Civil Rights Act, 25 U.S.C. §§ 1301, *et seq.*; and the Treaty of 1866, by denying our clients their citizenship rights. Ever since then, the MCN and even the tribal court itself has engaged in a slew of dilatory tactics to preclude our clients from obtaining a ruling that would permit them to re-file their original complaint in federal court. Counsel for the MCN has been unreasonably unavailable, filed frivolous briefs, and peppered us with discovery requests even though the facts are undisputed and the only issue to be decided is purely one of law to be decided by the court. Moreover, two of the only three judges available to preside over cases filed in the MCN District Court both recused themselves from the case over 6 months ago, and a new judge has not been assigned to the case. Consequently, the MCN has effectively prevented us from exhausting tribal remedies, knowing that is a prerequisite to re-filing our lawsuit in federal court.

EFFECT OF 2020 U.S. SUPREME COURT *McGIRT* RULING

Citizenship rights like voting and running for office are important enough to warrant congressional intervention in this matter, but the need for a legislative remedy has grown even more in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, 140 S. Ct. 2452. In *McGirt*, the Supreme Court held that the MCN reservation, which was established by way of the Treaty of 1866 and which comprises a large part of eastern Oklahoma, had never been disestablished, and that the State of Oklahoma therefore lacked jurisdiction within the bounds of the reservation to prosecute crimes under the Major Crimes Act.

Since this ruling was handed down, the MCN has been using it to rationalize the MCN's attempts to assert more power over other affairs here in the State of Oklahoma, such as energy and gaming. In other words, while the MCN actively defends against claims that its race-based discrimination against Creek Freedmen violates the Treaty of 1866, it simultaneously rationalizes its power grabs by pointing to the Treaty of 1866. The hypocrisy is simply stunning.

Moreover, *McGirt* has effectively created another disparity between Creek Freedmen and other MCN citizens. Because Creek Freedmen are being denied citizenship with the tribe, they are unable to avail themselves of the benefits of the *McGirt* ruling. Since *McGirt* was decided, state court judges have, in practice, required defendants seeking to have their cases dismissed based on *McGirt* to prove their affiliation by showing verification of tribal citizenship or by showing they possess some degree of Indian blood. Due to the MCN's racial discrimination against Creek Freedmen (who do not necessarily possess Indian blood), Freedmen who are prosecuted by the State have been left without a means to demonstrate their affiliation with the MCN. The result is that non-Black MCN members can get their cases dismissed, while Black Creeks cannot.

This disparity, based entirely on race, is unacceptable and blatantly violates the Creek Freedmen criminal defendants' constitutional rights under the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses, among others. These Creek Freedmen's liberty interests are at stake, providing more immediacy to the need for Congress to intervene to mandate that the MCN restore citizenship rights to Creek Freedmen.

ARTICLE II OF THE TREATY OF 1866 IS BINDING ON THE MCN

The Creek Treaty of 1866 is a bilateral agreement—negotiated and signed by two sovereign entities utilizing their executive and legislative governmental powers. The overall validity of the agreement has not been contested by the MCN and was upheld by the *McGirt* decision. Consequently, the Treaty of 1866 remains the supreme law of the land, both within the Creek Nation and within the United States of America.

The U.S. Supreme Court has established that there must be “clear and plain evidence that Congress actually considered the conflict between its intended action on the one hand and Indian treaty rights on the other and chose to resolve that conflict by abrogating the treaty.” *United States v. Dion*, 476 U.S. 734, 739-40 (1986). Restrictions on Indian Treaty abrogation are well-settled in U.S. Supreme Court precedent. Treaty rights are too fundamental to be casually cast aside: “Congress may abrogate Indian treaty rights, but it must clearly express its intent to do so.” *Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians*, 526 U.S. 172, 202 (1999) (citations omitted). There has been no act of Congress expressing any intent to abrogate Article II of the Creek Treaty of 1866. As a result, the MCN cannot unilaterally extinguish the Freedmen’s rights under the Creek Treaty of 1866.

The MCN exercised its sovereignty to execute and bind itself to the terms of the Creek Treaty of 1866, and the MCN cannot now, under the guise of sovereignty, claim the power to renege on its covenant to admit the Freedmen and their Descendants as citizens of the MCN. The U.S. Government has already analyzed a treaty provision functionally identical to Article II of the Creek Treaty of 1866 and found that it guaranteed Cherokee citizenship in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and, since the Cherokee Treaty of 1866 had not been abrogated, the Cherokee Nation had to grant Cherokee Freedmen citizenship within the Cherokee Nation. *See Cherokee Nation v. Nash*, 267 F.Supp.3d 86 (D.D.C. 2017).

SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE ACTION REQUESTED:

We are respectfully asking this Committee to support Congresswoman Maxine Waters’ (D-CA) language that would prevent MCN from receiving any benefits from the 2021 NAHASDA Reauthorization until Black Creek Indians’ citizenship rights are fully and completely restored. Specifically, this Committee and Congress must ensure that the MCN understands:

- The Creek Treaty of 1866 guarantees the Creek Freedmen Descendants the right to full and equal citizenship in the MCN;
- The Creek Freedmen Descendants are legally indistinguishable from other citizens of the MCN pursuant to the Creek Treaty of 1866;
- As equal citizens of the MCN, the Creek Freedmen Descendants are entitled to all rights, privileges, protections, and benefits arising from citizenship in the Creek Nation equally and on the same basis as all other MCN citizens, including, without limitation, the rights to vote in MCN elections, to run for and hold MCN office, and to receive funds and benefits available to MCN citizens;

- No federal statute or superseding treaty has modified the Creek Freedmen Descendants' citizenship rights as they were granted in the Creek Treaty of 1866;
- No amendment to the MCN Constitution has modified or can modify the citizenship rights of Creek Freedmen Descendants, because those rights are derived from the Creek Treaty of 1866 and not the MCN Constitution.

It was similar bold and sustained actions of members of the Congress on behalf of Cherokee Freedmen that paved the way for thousands of Cherokee Freedmen to secure their voting rights in 2007, and eventually secure their full citizenship rights with Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma ("CNO"). Specifically, in 2007, several members took a similar position as Congresswoman Waters is advocating today against the CNO. For example, on September 6, 2007, Congressman Mel Watt (D-NC) offered a successful amendment during the floor debate of H.R. 2786. Rep. Watt's amendment successfully limited funds to the CNO until they recognized Cherokee Freedmen as citizens.

CONCLUSION

In closing, the exclusion of Creek Freedmen from citizenship with the MCN is not a tribal sovereignty issue; it is a racial justice issue. While legislation like the *For the People Act* and the *George Floyd Justice in Policing Act* has rightfully been championed by this Congress. Legislation from this Congress to protect Black Creeks' fundamental rights as MCN citizens is just as important and necessary to ensure justice and equity for *all* Americans. Bold actions taken by the Congress helped the Cherokee Freedmen secure their full and complete citizenship rights within the CNO. My clients and your constituents are confident that your tangible support of their cause will produce similar results for Creek Freedmen. Lastly, if you have any questions or comments, you may contact me personally at 918-551-8999 or dss@solomonsimmons.com.

Sincerely,



Damario Solomon-Simmons, Esq., M.Ed.
FOR THE FIRM

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Gertie J. Alphonse*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/24/21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money .

Yours sincerely

Name *Gertie J. Alphonse*

Address and Phone:

*4110 Kings Road
Forest Park OK 73121
405-111-1122*

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

GERALD BARCUS

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

MARCH 20, 2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *GERALD BARCUS*

Address and Phone:

5451 N HARRISON LOT 41

SHARON, OK 74801 405 481-5019

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Lou Ann Barker*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *March 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

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Yours sincerely

Name *Lou Ann Barker*

Address and Phone: *36067 E1390
Sasakwa, Okla.
405-941-3183*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Phillip BARKUS
216 S Seminole
Wewoka, OK 74884

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 2-8-2020

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Phillip BARKUS

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole Nation DOSAR BARKUS Band

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Phillip BARKUS ~~Phu~~ BARKUS

Address and Phone: 216 S Seminole, Wewoka OK 74884

405-220-2089

DOSAR BARKUS Band
Seminole Nation

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Mildred Faye Roberts Bert

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Mildred Faye Roberts Bert

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Dosan Barkus

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Mildred Faye Roberts Bert

Address and Phone: 2420 Coitman Rd OKC, OK 73121

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Cheryl Bryant

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 8-20-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Cheryl Bryant

Address and Phone:

P.O. Box 18945 Okla. City, OK 73154

405.226.8472

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Rickey Burton*
1027 SUNNYMEADE WENDE OK 74884

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *2/8/20*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole Nation of Oklahoma*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Rickey Burton*

Address and Phone: *405-219-0563*

1027 SUNNYMEADE
WENDE OK 74884

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Kevin Carolina*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *March 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole freedman*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone:

Kevin Carolina
36067 E 1390
Sasakwa, Okla. 74869

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Ryan Carolina*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *March 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone:

Ryan Carolina
907 N Lilac
Midwest City, Okla. 73110

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Rosetta Cravens

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 7-23-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Rosetta Cravens

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Rosetta Cravens

Address and Phone:

1300 N.E. 56th Street
Okla. City, Okla. 73111

(405) 424-7719

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Sherman Cravens

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 7/23/21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Sherman Cravens

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Sherman Cravens

Address and Phone:

1312 N.E. 56th St. 917-605-0384
Okla. City, OK La 73111

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Sherad Cravens

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 7/23/21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Sherad Cravens

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Sherad Cravens

Address and Phone:

1312 N.E. 56th

OKC, OK 73111

405-365-1566

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Sherrye Cravens

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Sherrye Cravens

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name: Sherrye Cravens

Address and Phone:

1312 N.E. 56th street Oklahoma City, OK 73111
(405) 245-3362

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Steven Cravens

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 7-23-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Steven Cravens

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name 

Address and Phone:

5142 Burr Oaks Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
(703) 731-2424

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Sumayyah Cravens*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *7-23-21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Sumayyah Cravens*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members:

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Sumayyah Cravens

Address and Phone:

*5142 Burr Oaks Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73105*

(301) 674-1839

To: Congressman/Senator

From: D'Metrea Daniels

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 2-8-2020

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money.

Yours sincerely

Name D'Metrea Daniels

Address and Phone: (405-584-0341)
314 E 3rd St.
Wewoka, OK 74884

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Kenneth Edwards

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date 7/23/21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Kenneth Edwards

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members:

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Kenneth Edwards

Address and Phone:

P.O. Box
Wewoka, Okla. 74884 405-380-4853

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Kim Renado Edwards

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Kim Renado Edwards

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

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Yours sincerely

Name:

Kim Renado Edwards

Address and Phone:

6420 N Prospect
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

405-397-8089

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Randall Edwards*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *March 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Randall Edwards

Address and Phone:

2332 1-240 Svc. Rd. Apt 103

OKC

73159

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Terry L. Edwards

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date 7/23/21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Terry Edwards

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

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Yours sincerely

Name

Terry Edwards

Address and Phone:

36173 Old Hwy 270
Seminole, OK 74568 405-584-0914

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Treva Lynn Edwards

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3/20/21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Treva Lynn Edwards

Address and Phone:

2332 W F 2405th Rd Apt 103
Oklahoma 73159

To: Congressman/Senator

From *Wallace Edwards*

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants
Date

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Wallace Edwards*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole
We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Wallace Edwards*

Address and Phone:

*8014 N. Post Rd
Jones, ok
73049*

405-642-7185

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Maybelle (Thomas) Fisher*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Maybelle (Thomas) Fisher*

Address and Phone: *1434 N. E. 24th Oklahoma City, OK 73111
(405) 568-1952*

Maybelle Fisher

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Willie J. Chulley*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *02-08-20*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Willie J. Chulley*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation , and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Nation - Posar Barker

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Willie J. Chulley*

Address and Phone:

*410 S. Seminole Ave
Weslaca, Okla 74884*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Mary Roberts Gray*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/20/2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Mary Roberts Gray*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

*Seminole Tribe
marygray.vw111@gmail.com*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Mary Roberts Gray*

Address and Phone:

9720 S. Brookline ave OKC OK 73159

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Oscar L. Gray*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/20/2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Oscar L. Gray*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Nation

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Oscar L. Gray*

Address and Phone:

9720 S. Brookline Ave, OKC, OK 73155

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Tamia Gray*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/20/2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Tamia Gray*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Tribe

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Tamia Gray*

Address and Phone:

*9720 S. Brookline Ave
P.O. Box 72159*

Q

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Iana Leella Gray*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Iana Leella Gray*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Iana Leella Gray*

Address and Phone: *9720 S. Brookline Ave
OKC, OK 73159*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Joe G. Gue*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/20/21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Joe G. Gue*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole Freedmen*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Joe G. Gue*

Address and Phone: *10641 CR 3580
ADA, OKLAHOMA
74820*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: JERENA L. GUESS
36051 E 1390
SASA KWA, OKLA. 74867

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 2-8-20

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, JERENA L. GUESS

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is DOSAR BARKUS, SEMINOLE NATION

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name



Address and Phone:

36051 E 1390
SASA KWA, OKLA. 74867

405-941-3794

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *LARRY GUESS*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *2-6-2020*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation , and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *CHOCTAW NATION*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely *LARRY GUESS*

Name *Larry Guess*

Address and Phone:

36051 East 1390
SHSAKWA OKLA.
74867

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Ella James

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3.20.21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Ella James

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely Ella James

Name Ella James

Address and Phone: 505 S. Cheese
Wetmore, OK 74884

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Keira W. James

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants
Date

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Keira James*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above - as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time, however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money.

Yours sincerely

Name:

Keira James

Address and Phone:

*2340 NW 112th
Okla. City, OK
73120*

405-200-7214

To: Congressman/Senator

From

Renado W. James

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date *7-23-21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Renado James*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone:

Renado W. James
1324 NE 55th
Okla. City, OK
73111

405-421-3713

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Renaldo W. James, I

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to Tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 7-22-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

Renaldo James I

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone

1324 NE 55

OKla City, OK

73111

405-684-1913

To: Congressman/Senator

From Roland W. James

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date 7-22-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Roland James

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone

1324 NE 55th
Okla. City, OK

73111 405-824-9019

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Romell James*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Romell James*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Romell James*

Address and Phone:

*2340 NW 112th
Okla. City, Ok
73120*

405-280-7213

To Congressman/Senator

From

Senolia M. James

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date

7-23-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

Senolia M. James

I am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members

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Yours sincerely

Name

Senolia M. James

Address and Phone:

1324 NE 55th
Ave. City, OK
73111

405-684-1912

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

LAWANA Johnson

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

MARCH 20, 2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

LAWANA JOHNSON

Address and Phone:

1210 SW 72nd TERR

OKLA OK 73139

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *May Frances (Thomas) Johnson*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone:

May Frances (Thomas) Johnson
1434 NE 24th Oklahoma City, OK 73111
(405) 568-1952

May Frances Johnson

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Larry King

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: March 2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole Freedman

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Address and Phone:

Larry King
1328 N 24th west Pl & Tulsa OK
74127

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Swade King

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole freedmen

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Swade King

Name

Address and Phone:

1328 N 24th W #1
Tulsa, OK 74121

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *REGINALD Knighton*
BAND Chief Dosha Barker Seminole Nation

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Reginald Knighton

Address and Phone:

*1202 OKFUSKEE
W&WOKA, OK. 74884
405-623-6917*

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Keyara M. Laster

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/20/2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Keyara M. Laster*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole Tribe*
Mary Gray NW/IAA @ gmail.com

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Keyara M. Laster

Address and Phone:

9720 S. Brookline ave, OKC OK 73159

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Hawaen Leake*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *March 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name *Hawaen Leake*

Address and Phone: *5012 Shady Nook Way
Spencer, Okla*

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Curley ANN Lewis

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3-20-21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Curley ANN Lewis

Address and Phone:

2806 DEL CASA CIR. Midwest City, OK 73110
405 732 3237

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Reggie McMillian

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Reggie McMillian

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Tribe

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Reggie McMillian

Address and Phone:

1707 SW 8th St, Lawton, OK 73501

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Daundrae Moore

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Daundrae Moore

Address and Phone: 19100 Butterfly Blvd. Edmond OK, 73012
(405) 434-5019 <daundrae@yahoo.com>

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Curley J. Moseley*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3-20-2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

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Yours sincerely

Name

Moseley

Address and Phone:

*2320 NW 118th St
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
405-748-1673*

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Linda Napoleon

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

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No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money.

Yours sincerely

Name

Linda Napoleon

Address and Phone:

623 E. Main

Holdenville, OK
36048

405-379-5200

To: Congressman/Senator

From: **Representative Ajay Pittman**

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: **March 25, 2021**

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, **Representative Ajay Pittman**

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation , and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is **Seminole**

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name **Representative Ajay Pittman**



Address and Phone: **Post Office Box 17479
Oklahoma City, OK 73136**

To: Congressman/Senator

From: **Senator Anastasia A. Pittman**

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: **March 25, 2021**

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, **Senator Anastasia A. Pittman**

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation , and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is **Seminole**

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely



Name **Senator Anastasia A. Pittman**

Address and Phone: **Post Office Box 17479
Oklahoma City, OK 73136**

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Cornelius A. Pittman II*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date:

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *Cornelius A. Pittman II*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Cornelius A. Pittman II

Address and Phone:

*P.O Box 17479
OKC, OK 73136*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Shanna Powdrill

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Shanna

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Freedman

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Shanna Powdrill

Address and Phone:

2806 Del Casa Cir.
Midwest City 73110

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I. Deneen Reed

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation , and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Deneen M. Reed

Address and Phone:

43 NE 67th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, *St. Reed*

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *Seminole*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *St. Reed*

Address and Phone:

831 2nd St. NW

OKC OK 73114

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Jo A Reed

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Jo A Reed dejata2002@yahoo.com

Address and Phone: 405-613-3736

43 NE 67 St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Tanyanique Reed

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Tanyanique Reed

Address and Phone:

17421 Broken Dr Edmond, OK 73012
405-312-0615

To: Congressman/Senator

From:

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-24-2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Tanya L. Reed

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name Tanya L. Reed

Address and Phone:

17421 Bra Ken Dr

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *ALVIN C ROBERTS*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3/ /2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is *SEMINOLE FREEDMAN*

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *ALVIN C. ROBERTS*

Address and Phone:

*3608 N. TERRY AVE
OKC OK 73111
405-620-2118*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Don Carl Roberts

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Don Carl Roberts

Address and Phone:

4107 N Beaver Ave
Bethesda OK 73008 405-222-0354

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *George Roberts Jr.*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3-20-2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Freedman

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name *George C. Roberts Jr.*

Address and Phone:

*5409 N. Highway DR
OKC. OKIA 73111*

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Milford S Roberts*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *3-20-21*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Freedman

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Milford S Roberts

Address and Phone:

2832 Green Canyon Dr.

Edmond, OK 73013

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Russell Roberts Sr.

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: March 2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole FREEDMEN

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Russell Roberts Sr.

Address and Phone:

(C) 405-788-5336

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Zonya E. Roberts

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: March 2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Freedmen

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name

Zonya E. Roberts

Address and Phone:

405. 476. 0778

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Kaitlin Samuels

Reference Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants
Date

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Kaitlin Samuels

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation)

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members:

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederate states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty, however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

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Yours sincerely

Name: Kaitlin Samuels

Address and Phone:

1312 N.E. 56th street Oklahoma City, OK 73111
(405) 255-9980

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Jade Steele

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3-20-21

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Jade Steele

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

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Yours sincerely

Name Jade Steele

Address and Phone:

2417 S.W. 124th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73170

405-317-2727

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Mark Steele

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3/20/2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Mark Steele

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole Tribe

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money.

Yours sincerely

Name Mark Steele

Address and Phone: 2417 SW 124th Street, OKC OK 73170
(405) 317-8110

To: Congressman/Senator

From: Tammy Steele

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: 3/20/2021

Dear Congressman/Senator

I, Tammy Steele

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is Seminole Tribe

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money.

Yours sincerely

Name Tammy Steele

Address and Phone: 2417 SW 124th St., OKC OK 73170
(405) 317-8110

To: Congressman/Senator

From: *Albert Wright*

Reference: Indian Housing reauthorization language pertaining to tribal freedmen Descendants

Date: *MARCH 2021*

Dear Congressman/Senator

I,

am a Descendant of freedmen of the five tribes which were built on chattel slavery (Muscogee Creek Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw nation, and Cherokee nation).

My tribal heritage/history is

Seminole Freedman

We ask that you support efforts of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to obtain enforcement of 1866 treaty rights of freedmen tribal members/Descendants of freedmen tribal members.

House Financial service committee chairman Maxine Waters and her staff are working on language to put in a NAHASDA (Indian housing) reauthorization bill to tie receipt of Federal Indian Housing funds of the above listed tribes to equal treatment of their Freedmen tribal members/descendants of freedmen tribal members on the same basis as other members in accordance with 1866 treaties signed by the listed tribes and the United States government. This language would not affect any other tribes than those listed above – as other tribes did not join the Confederates states in order to keep persons of African ancestry as permanent chattel slaves. I believe in tribal sovereignty; however I also believe that tribal governments must keep their word & agreements (so far as tribal services and or equal tribal membership) to the US government and to persons formerly enslaved under tribal law prior to 1866.

No NAHASDA reauthorization bill has been introduced in the House financial service containing freedmen protective language at this time; however, we ask that you support Congresswoman Waters efforts to include such language in a NAHASDA reauthorization bill this term. We are aware that some tribal leaders have requested that some members of Congress not support legislation which "singles out tribes" so far as taxpayer funded NAHASDA program money .

Yours sincerely

Name

Albert Wright

Address and Phone:

4224 1st Collins Ln.

NORMAN, OK 73072

Phone (405) 226-1425



Dosar Barkus Band
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
ESTELUSTI FREEDMAN
P.O. Box 17479
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73136



Reginald Knighton, Band Chief
(405) 623-6917 | Sno.dosarbarkusband@gmail.com
1202 Okfuskee Ave • Wewoka, Oklahoma 74884

July 21, 2021

Attention: Chairwoman M. Waters and Committee House Financial Services
Re: NAHASDA Reauthorization: Addressing the historic disinvestment and the ongoing plight of the Freedmen in Native American communities.
Rayburn Office Building Rm. 2221
Washington, D.C. 20515

Greetings Congresswoman Maxine Waters,

Please allow this correspondence to serve as an official report in reference to the Housing Benefits for the Dosar Barkus (Freedmen) Band of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

Almost 2500 enrolled citizens in two Freedmen Bands have been limited to **"Voting Benefits only"** which is printed on the back of our enrollment cards. This discriminatory enrollment card prevents our members from receiving any benefits ensured by the Seminole Nat. Constitution Article XII 1. Article. II of the Act of April 26, 1906 (34 Stat. 137) Which expressly provides **equal economic benefits** to all citizens and descendants.

More specifically our elderly members who live in rural parts of Oklahoma are directly affected by the Seminole Housing application and system. The eligibility for housing is based on a CDIB point system that serves members by blood first, then members of neighboring tribes, before considering the Freedmen Seminoles. They live in poverty, needing disability ramps, safety bars, storm shelters in addition to all other denied benefits. The nation continues to count freedmen for funding but fail to provide services.

This process ensures that freedmen will be placed on a housing waiting list that will never be served. Asst. Band Chief Phillip L. Barkus has attached the housing application, his COVID 19 denial letter of services and letters requesting the language change in the bill.

Please feel free to contact us, or for a more immediate response contact our Band Secretary Anastasia A. Pittman at (405) 401-4407 or sno.dosarbarkusband@gmail.com
Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter of equity and equality.

Respectfully,

Reginald Knighton, Band Chief
(405) 623-6917 knightonreginald0@gmail.com

Phillip L. Barkus, Assistant Band Chief
(405) 220-2089 PLbarkus43@gmail.com

"NETTV HEROSE TOS" Inspire and empower our people for success.



Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band

Dear Congressional Members,

My Name is Sharon Lenzy-Scott, I have been an active member and board member of the Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band for 15 years. During this fifteen years we (MCIFB) have been pursuing for citizenship rights back into the Creek Nation.

My journey started with trying to regain my mother's citizenship before she passed away in 2000, to no avail. My mother's citizenship was attained by her Grandfather, (Jackson Perryman) which was a Loyal Creek, and was enrolled on the Dawes Roll with roll # 3635, along with his wife Minta Perryman and 10 children , which each received 160 acres. When asked how long had you been in the Creek Nation, Minta replied " All My Days" Little did she know that her grandchildren and great-grandchildren citizenship would be terminated from the very same nation in which she was born into.

The Creek Nation is in violation of the Treaty of 1866 art. 2, which gives the Freedmen of the Creek Nation full citizenship rights as all Creeks. To expel citizens from the Creek Nation, because of Black ancestry is in violation of the Treaty, and the Creek Nation should be penalized for their actions.

The federal Government has failed to protect the Freedmen Citizens from this Jim-Grow action, by not holding the Creek Nation responsible for their actions. Because of these racist actions, Freedmen are not receiving the medical, educational, housing, and other benefits afforded to the other citizens of the Creek Nation, which Freedmen are also entitled to receive.

We are asking you Congress to please correct the wrong that our people has endured, and hold the Creek Nation accountable for their actions. Freedmen should be given their full citizenship rights along with reinstatement of their citizenship.

Sharon Lenzy-Scott



Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band

P.O. BOX 6366*Moore, OK. 73153*www.1866creekfreedmen.com

The Ongoing Plight of Freedmen Descendants in Native American Communities

Terry J. Ligon Historian and Chickasaw/Choctaw Freedman Descendant
July 15, 2021

To the Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development and Insurance

I would like to thank the Honorable Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, the Chair of the Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development and Insurance and the Ranking Member French Hill on convening this hearing on to address the “Ongoing Plight of the Freedmen in Native American Communities.”

I'm sure your staffs have researched the history and the plight of the formerly enslaved populations of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee and Seminole Nations but I'm not sure you have all the history of people like me?

I consider myself to be someone among a very unique group of people because we represent a class of people who have wanted to know some basic questions regarding our heritage and rights relative to the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations. My Great-Great Grandfather was Robert Howard Love a recognized citizen of the Chickasaw Nation; he was also one of the signers of the Treaty of 1866.

Our plight began approximately in 1896 when some of our ancestors applied for Chickasaw and Choctaw citizenship. Our ancestors were exerting their claims of being the descendants of someone that was considered a “recognized citizen” in the Chickasaw or Choctaw nation.

When the Dawes Commission began enumerating people for the land allotment in 1898-1899 again our ancestors asserted their ancestry as being the children or grandchildren of a recognized Chickasaw and Choctaw citizen. It was at this point their claims were systematically denied, more importantly, their right to receive three-hundred and twenty acres of land as citizens by blood was denied. The denial was based on the antebellum theory that a person's race was based on the “race” of their mother.

Sadly this group of people made many attempts to have their rights as “citizens by blood” recorded by the Dawes Commission but they were met with one obstacle after another until finally having attorneys file a “class action” lawsuit that has become known as **Equity Case #7071, Bettie Ligon et al., Plaintiffs v Douglas H. Johnston, et al., Green McCurtain, et al., & James R. Garfield Secretary of the Interior Defendants.**

Equity Case #7071 involved approximately two-thousand people seeking to be transferred from the Freedmen Rolls to the Chickasaw or Choctaw by Blood rolls. The lawsuit that was filed on April 13, 1907 was considered “The most important suit that was ever filed with the clerk of the United States District Court since the establishment of the citizens’ tribunal...”ⁱ

The Ongoing Plight of the Chickasaw & Choctaw Freedmen

The reason this was declared the most important suit ever filed was because “the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes adopted a rule whereby they declared all person possessed of negro blood regardless of the quantum of Indian blood, to be negroes only and entitled to only to such share in the tribal properties as was accorded to ex-slaves.”

This action amounted to the loss of thousands of acres of land and it meant that their plight has continued and become the plight of their descendants who have been denied the “rights and privileges received by others who possess Chickasaw or Choctaw blood and inter-married whites who had absolutely no Chickasaw or Choctaw ancestry.

The two-thousand people that sought to be transferred from the freedmen roll to the by blood roll represented land that was valued at **\$20 Million dollars** when they filed that lawsuit in 1907. That was wealth that was denied the descendants of Equity Case #7071 and Congress needs to remedy that miscarriage of justice.

You will hear from others about the rights of freedmen the need for housing, healthcare and citizenship and I urge you to take the time to understand the complexity of the issues during your hearing. The history of racial bias, discrimination and denial of political, social and economic issues regarding the “ongoing plight” of the Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen are not disconnected from those issues that were litigated in Equity Case #7071.

There are a couple of other points I have learned from my research into Equity Case #7071 that are relevant to this hearing on the “ongoing plight” of the Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen. During the litigation of Equity Case #7071 it came before Judge Hosea Townsend, in the United States Court for the Southern District of Indian Territory, at Ardmore. Judge Townsend was answering a demurrer filed by the attorneys for the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations.

The attorneys argued and the judge agreed that his court did not have jurisdiction to rule on this case of equity because it was political in nature and the courts “cannot interfere with the political duties that Congress has assumed.”ⁱⁱ Clearly Judge Townsend considered the rights to 320 acres of land and citizenship in the nations was the jurisdiction of Congress.

Approximately four years later in March of 1911 the appeals attorney for Bettie Ligon and the 2,000 individuals seeking citizenship and 320 acres of land gave an interview to a reporter in Washington, D.C. The issues of citizenship and land allotment were still a contentious issue and Equity Case #7071 was accepted by the Supreme Court of the United States to be argued in the October term of the court that year.

In the interview Webster Ballinger the attorney stated he was abandoning his legal theory that “any person of mixed Indian and negro blood regardless of the degree was entitled to enrollment as an Indian.” After four years of making that argument he “doubted whether any person of this class who was not a recognized member of the tribe has a legal or equitable right either to share in these estates.”ⁱⁱⁱ

His actions and abandonment of his clients on the steps of the Supreme Court proved again how difficult it is to remove the “stigma” of chattel slavery and have the laws of this country applied equally. Otherwise, we would not be here today and you would not be have this hearing

The Ongoing Plight of the Chickasaw & Choctaw Freedmen

The Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen Descendants come before Congress again, like our ancestors before us, seeking equity as citizens in the nations of our ancestor's birth. The ongoing plight we have experienced since the signing of the Treaty of 1866 that did not contain an enforcement mechanism like the treaties with the Cherokee, Muskogee and Seminoles allowed the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations to avoid making citizens of their formerly enslaved population and Congress did nothing to protect their rights; OUR rights.

This are just a few examples of the plight experienced by the Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen and their descendants and again they are putting their faith in a system that has continually indicated their social, political and economic plight was not worthy of protection because they are of African and African-Native descent.

It is time the Congress of the United States and this committee protects the rights written in the Treaty of 1866 and the Constitution and includes the Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen descendants in ALL funding and ALL programs received by the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations.

It is time the issues of citizenship and equal rights as "citizens" of the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations to be decided and if not let me leave you with something else I learned about my Great Grandmother Bettie.

Bettie's attorney wrote a letter to the Commissioner, *"An attempt has been made once before to deliver these patents to betty Ligon and those similarly situated, but action upon the advice of their attorneys, they have refused to receive them and we return to you, herewith, the above numbered patents, and inform you that it is useless to again mail these patents to Betty Ligon, as she declines to receive them until after the courts have finally passed upon the case now pending, which case will determine whether or not she is entitled to participate in the tribal property as an Indian by blood or as a Freedman."*^{iv}

Bettie's determination to right a wrong is my history and my example; she is the example for thousands more who are Chickasaw and Choctaw Freedmen Descendants asking Congress to finally protect our rights as citizens of both nations.

We are standing on the shoulders of our ancestors and we will continue this fight until we receive **"the rights and privileges"** as citizens in the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations!

Thank you for your time, I ask that this memorial be included in the official record of the hearing.

Terry J. Ligon

ⁱ The Daily Ardmoreite, April 14, 1907 p6c5-6

ⁱⁱ Bettie Ligon et al., Plaintiffs vs Douglas H. Johnson et al., Defendants Demurrer May 06, 1907

ⁱⁱⁱ The Daily Ardmoreite March 13, 1911

^{iv} Choctaw Freedman Land Allotment #2604 p11