

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023**

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**HOUSE BILL 970**

Short Title: State Recognition for The Tuscarora/Funds. (Public)

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Sponsors: Representative Goodwin.

*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

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Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

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May 6, 2024

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1  
2 AN ACT TO GRANT STATE RECOGNITION TO THE TUSCARORA OF EASTERN  
3 NORTH CAROLINA, TO PROVIDE REPRESENTATION OF THE TUSCARORA ON  
4 THE STATE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS  
5 TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, NORTH CAROLINA COMMISSION  
6 OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, TO UPDATE THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE AND  
7 PUBLICATIONS TO INCLUDE THE TUSCARORA OF EASTERN NORTH  
8 CAROLINA.

9       Whereas, The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina, also known as Skaru:re, hemp  
10 gatherers, the shirt wearing people, and the people of the sunken pines, are a pre-contact, First  
11 Nation Indian Tribe of North Carolina and are documented in North Carolina's and Virginia's  
12 Colonial records; and

13       Whereas, they are blood kin to the Haudenosaunee, People of the Longhouse, who  
14 are the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and the Seneca: The Five Nations that created the  
15 Iroquois Confederacy, which is one of the greatest and most powerful Native American groups  
16 in North American history. The Iroquois Confederacy abides by the Great Law of Peace that  
17 united the five tribes and brought peace to the people. The Great Law of Peace is the first form  
18 of democracy on the North American continent and was one of the founding principles for the  
19 United States Constitution. (U.S. Senate Resolution 76, 1987; U.S. House Concurrent Resolution  
20 331, 1988); and

21       Whereas, The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina have demonstrated organized  
22 continuity spanning to precolonial times and have formally organized no fewer than 20 years ago  
23 with provided documentation and have maintained the core governing bodies of Tuscarora  
24 people to this day; and

25       Whereas, The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina have adopted The Tuscarora  
26 Council of the Great to unify and govern their people with one mind; Now, therefore,  
27 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

30       "**§ 71A-7.3. The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina; rights, privileges, immunities,**  
31       **obligations, and duties.**

32       The Indians comprising three core communities: The Tuscarora Indian Nation of North  
33 Carolina Prospect Longhouse, Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina, and the Tuscarora Tribe of  
34 North Carolina, whose ancestors, in 1718, entered a treaty with the government of North Carolina  
35 and were granted Indian Woods, a 56,000-acre tract of lands on the Roanoke River in what is



1 now Bertie County, and who are of the same linguistic stock as the other tribes of the Iroquois  
2 Confederacy of New York and Canada, shall, from and after July 1, 2024, be designated and  
3 officially recognized as The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina, and they shall continue to  
4 enjoy all their rights, privileges, and immunities as an American Indian Tribe with a recognized  
5 tribal governing body carrying out and exercising substantial governmental duties and powers  
6 similar to the State, being recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided  
7 by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians. The Tuscarora of Eastern North  
8 Carolina shall maintain individual enrollment criteria, providing an opportunity for unenrolled  
9 Tuscarora descendants to enroll and shall govern themselves in a manner that will benefit and  
10 unify all Tuscarora that come under their governance."

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

12 **"§ 143B-407. North Carolina State Commission of Indian Affairs – membership; term of**  
13 **office; chairman; compensation.**

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

36 ...."

37 **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
38 Administration, North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, the sum of twenty thousand  
39 dollars (\$20,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to update the Department's  
40 website and publications to include The Tuscarora of Eastern North Carolina, as recognized by  
41 Sections 1 and 2 of this act.

42 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2024.