



# HOUSE BILL 600: Recognition of the Tuscarora.

2025-2026 General Assembly

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**Committee:** House Federal Relations and American Indian Affairs **Date:** July 1, 2026  
**Introduced by:** Reps. Goodwin, Stevens, Cunningham, Penny **Prepared by:** Debbie Griffiths  
**Analysis of:** PCS to First Edition **Staff Attorney**  
H600-CSCI-59

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**OVERVIEW:** *The PCS to House Bill 600 would restore official recognition to the Tuscarora Tribe, provide the tribe with representation on the North Carolina State Commission of Indian Affairs and the American Indian Heritage Commission, and appropriate funds to each Commission to update their website, materials, and other items to reflect the membership change.*

## CURRENT LAW AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- The Commission of Indian Affairs consists of 28 members of which 21 are representatives of the Indian community selected by tribal or community consent from Indian groups recognized by the State. It was established to deal fairly and effectively with Indian affairs, utilize local, state, and federal resources to provide aid and protection for Indians as the need arises, hold land in trust for the benefit of State-recognized Indian tribes, assist Indian communities in social and economic development, and promote recognition of and the right of Indians to pursue cultural and religious traditions considered by them to be sacred and meaningful.
- The American Indian Heritage Commission consists of 12 members who are representatives of the Indian community and are selected by tribal or community consent from Indian groups recognized by the State. It advises and assists the Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources in the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of American Indian history, arts, customs, and culture.

**BILL ANALYSIS:** The PCS to House Bill 600 would do the following:

- Provide State recognition of the Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories to include continued enjoyment of their rights, privileges, and immunities as an American Indian Tribe with a recognized tribal governing body, eligibility for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians, and require the tribe to maintain tribal enrollment criteria which provides all descendants the opportunity to enroll, and to govern in a manner that will benefit and unify all Tuscarora coming under their governance.
- Increase the total number of seats on the Commission of Indian Affairs to 30 by providing the Tuscarora with 2 seats and increase the total number of seats on the American Indian Heritage Commission to 13 by providing the Tuscarora with 1 seat.
- Appropriate five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in nonrecurring funds to each Commission to assist with updating its website, materials, and other documentation to reflect the new membership.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Sections 4 and 5 of the act would become effective July 1, 2026. The remainder of the act would become effective when it becomes law.

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