
DIGEST

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HB 660 Original

2018 Regular Session

Magee

Abstract: Provides for the creation of the Native American Commission within the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs.

Proposed law provides for the creation of the Native American Commission within the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs. Provides that the commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall consist of members appointed by the following:

- (1) Adai Caddo Indians of Louisiana
- (2) Bayou Lafource Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw
- (3) Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb
- (4) Clifton Choctaw Tribe of Louisiana
- (5) Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe
- (6) Grand Caillou/Dulac Band
- (7) Isle de Jean Charles Band
- (8) Louisiana Band of Choctaw Indians
- (9) Natchitoches Tribe of Louisiana
- (10) Point au-Chien Tribe
- (11) United Houma Nation

Proposed law further provides that the following members shall serve as ex-officio members:

- (1) The director of the Office of Indian Affairs
- (2) The secretary of the Department of Veteran's Affairs or designee

- (3) The state archeologist or his designee
- (4) One member representing the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
- (5) One member representing the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- (6) One member representing the Jena band of Choctaw Indians
- (7) One member representing the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

Proposed law provides that the commission may add state recognized tribes and federally recognized tribes to its membership and ex-officio membership as tribes are officially granted state or federal recognition.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall do the following:

- (1) Advise the Office of Indian Affairs regarding issues pertaining to Native Americans.
- (2) Identify the needs and concerns of Native Americans in La. by bringing such needs and concerns to the attention of the Office of Indian Affairs.
- (3) Make recommendations to the Office of Indian Affairs to address the needs and concerns of Native Americans in La..
- (4) Establish criteria for state tribe recognition and recommend such criteria to the Office of Indian Affairs and legislature for adoption and implementation.
- (5) Review applications for the Office of Indian Affairs Scholarship and recommend scholarship awardees to the Office of Indian Affairs.
- (6) Promote Native American culture, awareness, and education across the state.
- (7) Promote Native American Heritage Month in La..
- (8) Conduct a comprehensive review of all state departments and agencies to identify obstacles to the effective delivery of governmental services by all service providers at all levels of government to Native Americans, propose methods for removing those obstacles, and submit such proposals to the appropriate governmental entity or entities.

Proposed law provides that all appointments shall be made for four years, except in cases where appointees are unable to complete their terms. If a member is unable to complete his term, the appointing entity shall appoint a member for the length of the unexpired term.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall elect as officers a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary from its membership. All officers shall serve for two years. The commission shall

create its own bylaws, The commission shall meet at least once every quarter, and may meet more often as determined by the chairman.

Proposed law provides that a majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. Further provides that all official business of the commission shall require the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the members present.

Proposed law provides that commission members shall not receive compensation or a per diem for their services or attendance at council meetings, except for those travel related expenses already provided for by their agency.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall have authority to request consultation or information, or both, from any state department or agency serving Native Americans. The department or agency shall give priority to the request and shall provide the data or assistance as requested. Requires the commission to maintain the confidentiality of any information or records provided, as required by laws relative to such information and records.

Proposed law provides that the council shall be domiciled in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Proposed law requires the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs to assist as needed in providing staff report for the council, including but not limited to the scheduling of meetings.

Proposed law provides that legislation may be recommended by the commission to the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs only upon approval by a 2/3 vote of the commission members present.

Proposed law requires the commission to annually issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the governor and legislature.

(Adds R.S. 46:2305)