

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 474

To amend the Lumbee Act of 1956.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 16, 2025

Mr. ROUZER (for himself, Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina, Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. ROSS, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. McDOWELL, and Mr. MOORE of North Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Lumbee Act of 1956.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Lumbee Fairness Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.**

6 The Act of June 7, 1956 (70 Stat. 254, chapter 375),
7 is amended—

8 (1) by striking section 2;

9 (2) in the first sentence of the first section, by
10 striking “That the Indians” and inserting the fol-
11 lowing:

1 **“SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF LUMBEE INDIANS.**

2 “The Indians—”;

3 (3) in the preamble—

4 (A) by inserting before the first undesig-
5 nated clause the following:

6 **“SEC. 1. FINDINGS.**

7 “Congress finds that—”;

8 (B) by designating the undesignated
9 clauses as paragraphs (1) through (4), respec-
10 tively, and indenting appropriately;

11 (C) by striking “Whereas” each place it
12 appears;

13 (D) by striking “and” after the semicolon
14 at the end of each of paragraphs (1) and (2)
15 (as so designated); and

16 (E) in paragraph (4) (as so designated), by
17 striking “: Now, therefore,” and inserting a pe-
18 riod;

19 (4) by moving the enacting clause so as to ap-
20 pear before section 1 (as so designated);

21 (5) by striking the last sentence of section 3 (as
22 designated by paragraph (2));

23 (6) by inserting before section 3 (as designated
24 by paragraph (2)) the following:

25 **“SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

26 “In this Act:

1 “(1) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
2 the Secretary of the Interior.

3 “(2) TRIBE.—The term ‘Tribe’ means the
4 Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina or the Lumbee In-
5 dians of North Carolina.”; and

6 (7) by adding at the end the following:

7 **“SEC. 4. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Federal recognition is extended
9 to the Tribe (as designated as petitioner number 65 by
10 the Office of Federal Acknowledgment).

11 “(b) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS.—All laws and regula-
12 tions of the United States of general application to Indi-
13 ans and Indian tribes shall apply to the Tribe and its
14 members.

15 “(c) PETITION FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—Notwith-
16 standing section 3, any group of Indians in Robeson and
17 adjoining counties, North Carolina, whose members are
18 not enrolled in the Tribe (as determined under section
19 5(d)) may petition under part 83 of title 25 of the Code
20 of Federal Regulations for acknowledgment of tribal exist-
21 ence.

22 **“SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL SERVICES.**

23 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Tribe and its members shall
24 be eligible for all services and benefits provided by the
25 Federal Government to federally recognized Indian tribes.

1 “(b) SERVICE AREA.—For the purpose of the delivery
2 of Federal services and benefits described in subsection
3 (a), those members of the Tribe residing in Robeson, Cum-
4 berland, Hoke, and Scotland counties in North Carolina
5 shall be deemed to be residing on or near an Indian res-
6 ervation.

7 “(c) DETERMINATION OF NEEDS.—On verification
8 by the Secretary of a tribal roll under subsection (d), the
9 Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
10 ices shall—

11 “(1) develop, in consultation with the Tribe, a
12 determination of needs to provide the services for
13 which members of the Tribe are eligible; and

14 “(2) after the tribal roll is verified, each submit
15 to Congress a written statement of those needs.

16 “(d) TRIBAL ROLL.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—For purpose of the delivery
18 of Federal services and benefits described in sub-
19 section (a), the tribal roll in effect on the date of en-
20 actment of this section shall, subject to verification
21 by the Secretary, define the service population of the
22 Tribe.

23 “(2) VERIFICATION LIMITATION AND DEAD-
24 LINE.—The verification by the Secretary under
25 paragraph (1) shall—

1 “(A) be limited to confirming documentary
2 proof of compliance with the membership cri-
3 teria set out in the constitution of the Tribe
4 adopted on November 16, 2001; and

5 “(B) be completed not later than 2 years
6 after the submission of a digitized roll with sup-
7 porting documentary proof by the Tribe to the
8 Secretary.

9 **“SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE LAND INTO TRUST.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other pro-
11 vision of law, the Secretary is hereby authorized to take
12 land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

13 “(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN LAND.—An applica-
14 tion to take into trust land located within Robeson Coun-
15 ty, North Carolina, under this section shall be treated by
16 the Secretary as an ‘on reservation’ trust acquisition
17 under part 151 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations
18 (or a successor regulation).

19 **“SEC. 7. JURISDICTION OF STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.**

20 “(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to land located
21 within the State of North Carolina that is owned by, or
22 held in trust by the United States for the benefit of, the
23 Tribe, or any dependent Indian community of the Tribe,
24 the State of North Carolina shall exercise jurisdiction
25 over—

1 “(1) all criminal offenses that are committed;
2 and

3 “(2) all civil actions that arise.

4 “(b) TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
6 the Secretary may accept on behalf of the United
7 States, after consulting with the Attorney General of
8 the United States, any transfer by the State of
9 North Carolina to the United States of any portion
10 of the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina de-
11 scribed in subsection (a) over Indian country occu-
12 pied by the Tribe pursuant to an agreement between
13 the Tribe and the State of North Carolina.

14 “(2) RESTRICTION.—A transfer of jurisdiction
15 described in paragraph (1) may not take effect until
16 2 years after the effective date of the agreement de-
17 scribed in that paragraph.

18 “(c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section affects the ap-
19 plication of section 109 of the Indian Child Welfare Act
20 of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1919).”.

○