

Cherokee Council House
Cherokee, North Carolina

RESOLUTION NO. _____ (2018)

WHEREAS, Tribal Council approved a motion 11-1 during their regular session on Thursday, April 5, 2018 banning all media from the Tribal Council House with the exception of the Cherokee One Feather; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians codified Chapter 75 Newspapers, Article II Free Press Act on May 12, 2006 with the passage of Ord. No. 214 (2006); and

WHEREAS, Section 75.52 of the Free Press Act states, "The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Free Press shall be independent from any undue influence and free of any particular political interest. It is the duty of the press to report without bias the activities of the tribe, the tribal government, and any and all news of interest to have informed citizens"; and

WHEREAS, the Editorial Board of the Cherokee One Feather wrote a collective commentary published online on Monday, April 9 and in the Thursday, April 12 print issue entitled "Freedom of speech takes a step backward" which states in part, "One of the responsibilities of the press is to document and hold government accountable. The press is held accountable by our fellow media and journalists. We think this action sends a message that should be concerning to anyone interested in a free press..."; and

WHEREAS, the commentary concluded by stating, "We honor our elder stateswoman, Painttown Representative Tommye Saunooke, and we do not condone any disrespect to her. We feel that there are different avenues to justice that would better serve the causes of accuracy in reporting and free press than the action taken on April 5;" and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee One Feather, in its policies, adheres to the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics whose preamble states, "Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy;" and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee One Feather has many good, active, working relationships with media outlets not only here in western North Carolina but across the country, and the Editorial Board feels that many ethical, hard-working, journalists are being adversely affected by this motion with no due cause.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Tribal Council assembled, at which a quorum is present, that the Tribal Council hereby rescinds the previous motion banning all media outlets, with the exception of the Cherokee One Feather, from the Tribal Council House.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution will become effective upon ratification by the Principal Chief.

Submitted by Cherokee One Feather Editorial Board