



***Ho-Chunk Department of Heritage Preservation***

**Cultural Resources Division**

P.O. Box 667

Black River Falls, WI 54615

Tel 715-284-7181 / Fax 715-284-7449

To Whom It May Concern;

On October 8th, 2016, during a Wisconsin State Senate Study Committee meeting pertaining to Wis. Stat. 157.70 (Burial Law), a short discussion took place regarding the written comment letter presented to the Study Committee by the Wisconsin Inter-Tribal Repatriations Committee. Due to a limited timeframe, there was a request to better define one of the bulleted comments within the document which stated in part, “*Expand the burial board committee membership to include all federally recognized tribes*”.

To align the context of this request to consider, and given the parameters of the mission of the Study Committee, the descriptions below pertain to federally recognized tribes within the State of Wisconsin who would have burial related interests.

The Wis. Stat. 15.705 provides the following language describing appointments to the Burial Board as follows:

“15.705 (1) BURLIAL SITES PRESERVATION BOARD. There is created a burial sites preservation board attached to the historical society under s. 15.03, consisting of the state archaeologist, as a nonvoting member, the director of the historical society if the director is not serving as the state historic preservation officer, the state historic preservation officer, or her or his formally appointed designee, who shall be a nonvoting member unless the director of the historical society is serving as the state historic preservation officer, and the following members appointed for 3-year terms:

(a) Three members, selected from a list of names submitted by the Wisconsin archaeological survey, who shall have professional qualifications in the fields of archaeology, physical anthropology, history or a related field.

(b) Three members who shall be members of federally recognized Indian tribes or bands in this state, selected from names submitted by the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council and the Menominee tribe. Each such member shall be knowledgeable in the field of tribal preservation planning, history, archaeology or a related field or shall be an elder, traditional person or spiritual leader of his or her tribe.”

It should be noted; it is not mandatory for Tribes to retain membership status within the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Committee (GLITC). In fact, Tribes do elect to come and go as participating members for various reasons (e.g. political climate, funding support, etc.).

At times for example, the Ho-Chunk Nation has elected to not participate or be part of GLITC affairs as members. In doing so, this then effects in part, the ability to request to participate in the Wisconsin Burial Board functions as a seated member. We are asking that if the Study Committee does make recommendations regarding Wis. Stat. 157.70, a statutory modification takes place, in order to assure all Wisconsin Tribes have an equal opportunity in this matter.

Through the years, discussions have taken place within the preservation community, with several options have been discussed at some length. several of these solutions to this would be to include the modification of wording to Wis. Stat. 15.705 as follows:

15.705(1)(b): “Three members who shall be members of federally recognized Indian tribes or bands resident in this state, selected from names submitted by the Great Lakes inter-tribal council and any Wisconsin-resident tribes or bands not members of the Great Lakes inter-tribal council. Each such member shall be knowledgeable in the field of tribal preservation planning, history, archaeology or a related field or shall be an elder, traditional person or spiritual leader of his or her tribe.”

Or, a simpler solution would be to eliminate the need for the involvement of GLITC and to allow for the Governor to select from the names submitted when a seat opens up, worded something to the effect as:

15.705(1)(b): “Three members who shall be members of federally recognized Indian tribes or bands resident in this state, selected from names submitted by Wisconsin-resident tribes or bands. Each such member shall be knowledgeable in the field of tribal preservation planning, history, archaeology or a related field or shall be an elder, traditional person or spiritual leader of his or her tribe.”

There may be other options, but these suggestions seemed to afford the best solution to this matter.

Thank you for your time and considerations.

Respectfully,

William Quackenbush  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Cultural Resources Manager  
Ho-Chunk Nation