



## **SEQUOYAH DAY PROCLAMATION**

Whereas, 2021 marks the 200th anniversary of the creation of the Cherokee Syllabary by one of the most influential figures in Cherokee history, and;

Whereas, Sequoyah, who worked to create the Cherokee Syllabary over a period of years, established a set of written symbols that each represent a syllable in the spoken Cherokee language; and

Whereas, Sequoyah's Cherokee Syllabary allowed the Cherokee Nation in the early 19th Century to achieve astounding literacy rates, with the majority of Cherokees learning to read and write with the use of the Syllabary; and

Whereas, Sequoyah completed work on the Cherokee Syllabary in 1821, and the Cherokee Nation formally adopted his creation as its official written system of the Cherokee language in 1825; and

Whereas, upon the forced removal of Cherokees from their homelands in the Southeastern United States in 1838 at the hands of the United States government, the Cherokee language and the Cherokee Syllabary were carried to Indian Territory and used extensively, including with the Cherokee Phoenix newspaper, which printed the first bilingual newspaper in U.S. history; and

Whereas, the Cherokee language has always been the heart and soul of the Cherokee Nation, containing knowledge and lifeways that can never be fully captured in translation. The Cherokee language is a core piece of Cherokee identity and allows us to perpetuate our rich culture; and

Whereas, although the Cherokee language survives in 2021, only about 2,000 first-language Cherokee speakers are alive today, and;

Whereas, Since their first days in office, Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. and Deputy Chief Bryan Warner have made it a top priority to swiftly and decisively make historic investments in an effort to preserve and perpetuate the precious Cherokee language; and

Whereas, this anniversary should be recognized for the immeasurable impact of Sequoyah's Cherokee Syllabary on generations of Cherokee families; and

Whereas, this proclamation reaffirms the Cherokee Nation's commitment to protecting and perpetuating the Cherokee language for generations to come; and

Now Therefore, I Chuck Hoskin Jr., Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation proclaim this 15th day of October, 2021, be named in honor of the 200th anniversary of Sequoyah's Cherokee Syllabary.