



Dear Lumbee People,

February 2nd is an official Lumbee Holiday, recognizing when our people came together to adopt the name Lumbee as our tribal name, which is our sovereign right. Our leaders took this necessary step on February 2, 1952, to stop the continuous mislabeling of our people by the State of North Carolina. By naming ourselves we took back our rights and recognized ourselves as the Lumbee people. This move, to take our name after the Lumbee River that we call ours, was much welcomed. There were 2,169 people voting for the measure with only a few dozen voting against the name. Here in North Carolina, the Sappony Tribe changed their name from the Indians of Person County in 2003, finally ending the state's practice of mis-naming Indian nations. Exercising our inherent sovereignty and reclaiming our naming rights solidified our ties to the River and the Land and it ended the State's ability to change our name when they saw fit.

Recently, I submitted Ronnette Sutton and Emily Deese to the Tribal Council for appointment to the Lumbee Tribe Supreme Court. The Lumbee Tribal Council approved the two new justices during their February Business Meeting. Ms. Sutton is a practicing attorney with a law degree (JD) from UNC School of Law. Ms. Deese is an Energy Service Specialist with a master's in business administration (MBA) from UNC-Pembroke. These two individuals will hear cases that come before the court and will make rulings along with the other three members. I am proud of their continued commitment to our Tribe and community.

Included in President Trump's Presidential Memorandum about full federal recognition for the Lumbee people, was a requirement that the Department of Interior (DOI) consult with Tribe as they prepared their report to the President. Tribal Officials and the DOI have moved forward quickly, holding our first consultation on February 11th. The meeting was very productive, and I felt like the DOI officials properly listened to our comments and asked appropriate questions. DOI has an April 23rd deadline to have a report sent to the White House and they are working to have this completed ahead of time.

I love you all and I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as Chairman of our great Tribal Nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Lowery".

John L. Lowery
Chairman

OFFICE OF THE LUMBEE TRIBAL CHAIRMAN

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