



Dear Lumbee People,

February was a month full of activities for the Lumbee Tribe.

Our North Carolina Congressional leadership introduced the "Bill to Amend the 1956 Lumbee Act," or as the short title goes, the "Lumbee Fairness Act." This bill is meant to amend the Lumbee Act that was passed in 1956, which acknowledged us a Tribe but denied us services. I want to thank Senator Tillis and Congressman Rouzer for being the main sponsors of our bill and to the bipartisan group of co-sponsors who continue to work with us to get this bill across the finish line. We have several new strategies we are focusing on to help achieve our goal of FULL federal recognition as we move forward into this new congressional session.

We kicked off our Cultural Workshop series with workshops being held every Monday at Southern Spirit Boys and Girls Club. Our workshops will focus on basketmaking, making moccasins, making medicine from herbs, along with dancing and singing and much more. Our goal with these workshops is to remind our people of how our ancestors lived and the way they made items using the natural resources around them. Although we have modern tools, we can still practice and understand what made the ways of our ancestors so special and unique. Please join our staff and our artisans as they showcase and teach their talents. We will expand these workshops to other communities in the future.

Another first for me, as Chairman, was the invitation by Congressman Rouzer to attend President Biden's Annual State of the Union Address. This was a great honor as I was able to meet with numerous lawmakers and other tribal leaders. Washington, DC was full of energy that day and I truly enjoyed being able to witness the President deliver his speech before a worldwide audience.

I want to highlight a project led by our Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (TPHO) Kevin Melvin. As part of his graduate school program, Kevin led the effort to build a dugout canoe using the same fire burn and scrape methods that our ancestor used for centuries. For eight months, Kevin and numerous volunteers used traditional techniques to carve out the canoe. They sank it in the lake at the Lumbee Tribe Cultural Center, where the water will help preserve the wooden vessel. Kevin has named the canoe "Wisdom". Working in collaboration with Nancy Strickland Fields at UNC-Pembroke's Museum of the Southeast American Indian, he will bring the canoe up in May and eventually take it on a tour throughout North Carolina as one part of the "Life by the River" Project. Congratulations to Kevin, Nancy, and the many others who played a part in the creation of Wisdom. I cannot wait to see it in May.

Thank you for this opportunity to be the Chairman of the Lumbee Tribe.

I love you all,

John L. Lowery

