



# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

*No. 285*

EFFECTIVE June 15, 2025

WHEREAS, The Seaconke Wampanoag are part of the larger Wampanoag people but are not a federally recognized tribe; and

WHEREAS, The lack of recognition by both the federal government and by the State of Rhode Island prevents members from receiving the full benefit of relevant opportunities for federal education, job training, and housing benefits as well as federal protections for the sale of artwork, public and private grants directed toward Indian tribes or groups and their members, the participation of the tribe and its members in traditional religious practices and ceremonies, the protection and preservation of burial sites and artifacts, and the selling of genuinely "Indian made" handicrafts by tribe members; and

WHEREAS, If enacted, H-5733 would grant limited purpose state recognition as a Native American Indian tribe as permitted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the United States Department of the Interior, rendering the Seaconke Wampanoag eligible for those aforementioned opportunities and protections; and

WHEREAS, State recognition will allow the Seaconke Wampanoag, the majority of whom are Rhode Island residents, to more vigorously establish and protect their heritage and traditions as they have sought to do four times previously before the Rhode Island General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Recognition by the State would merely be mirroring legislatively the actions taken by the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs in 1997 in its recognition of the Seaconke Wampanoag; and

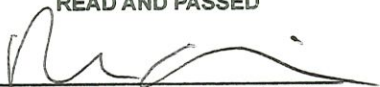

WHEREAS, The history and perseverance of the Seaconke Wampanoag are inextricably tied to the history of Providence and of Rhode Island, with significant portions of the land upon which the Seaconke Wampanoag historically resided and the towns and cities of the East Bay were founded conveyed by deed to or due to the negotiation of Roger Williams, founder of Providence and of Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, The Providence City Council wishes to convey its gratitude to the Rhode Island General Assembly for its sincere consideration of this matter.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council strongly supports H-5733 and urges the General Assembly to pass this resolution to grant the Seaconke Wampanoag tribe state recognition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon passage, copies of this resolution be transmitted to lead sponsor Representative Scott Slater, Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives K. Joseph Shekarchi, President of the Rhode Island Senate Valarie J. Lawson, and the remainder of the Providence Delegation.

IN CITY COUNCIL  
JUN 05 2025  
READ AND PASSED

  
RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT  
  
CLERK

Effective without the  
Mayor's Signature  
  
Tina L. Mastroianni  
City Clerk

2025 -- H 5733

LC001998

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

JOINT RESOLUTION

CONFERRING LIMITED PURPOSE RECOGNITION TO THE NATIVE AMERICAN  
SEACONKE WAMPANOAG TRIBE

Introduced By: Representatives Slater, Diaz, Morales, and DeSimone

Date Introduced: February 26, 2025

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

1 WHEREAS, According to the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, under the Department of  
2 the Interior, each state legislature has the authority to determine if/when state recognition shall be  
3 granted to its indigenous tribes; now, therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island hereby officially  
5 recognizes the Seaconke Wampanoag tribe as a Native American Indian tribe for the limited  
6 purpose of assisting this tribe in establishing eligibility for federal education, job training, and  
7 housing benefits and federal protection for the sale of artwork; qualifying for public and private  
8 grants for which Indian tribes or groups, or members thereof, may be eligible; protecting the  
9 ability of this tribe and their members to engage in traditional religious practices and ceremonies;  
10 preserving and protecting burial sites and artifacts; and ensuring that handicrafts made by tribal  
11 members may be sold as "Indian made"; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly hereby further states that this resolution shall  
13 not confer recognition for any purpose except as expressly stated herein, and shall not be  
14 evidence that the tribe has a State compact or State approval for the purposes of the federal Indian  
15 Gaming Regulatory Act, 25 U.S.C. ch. 29 § 2701 et seq.; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly hereby further states that the limited State  
17 recognition accorded to this tribe shall not be construed to affect in any way a tribe's or group's  
18 case for federal recognition, shall not confer the right of any tribe, group or individual to conduct  
19 gambling of any kind or to engage in the sale of motor fuels or tobacco and shall not constitute an

1 acknowledgement of any claim by any tribe, group, or individual to any ancestral, tribal or other  
2 public or private lands; and be it further

3           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
4 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable Daniel McKee, Governor of the  
5 State of Rhode Island.

=====  
LC001998  
=====