

Rep. Taylor: State of the Tribes address highlights importance of Wisconsin's native nations

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Rep. Chris Taylor, 608-266-5342

Oneida Chairman Hill calls for environmental protections and removal of Native American school mascots

MADISON – Today, Oneida Nation Chairman Tehassi Hill delivered the 15th annual State of the Tribes Address at the Wisconsin State Capitol. The address emphasized that the eleven federally-recognized tribes of our state are sovereign nations within a nation and identified environmental, health, and economic issues the tribes and state legislature should be working on.

Chairman Hill highlighted important issues facing Native communities, such as the threats of climate change, the impacts of violence against women in tribal communities, the need for Medicaid expansion to attract critical federal dollars, and the importance of upholding the Indian Child Welfare Act. Hill also spoke about strengthening Wisconsin Act 31 to improve public school curriculum on Wisconsin's tribal nations and removing school mascots that perpetuate racism by using Native American imagery and stereotypes.

In response, Rep. Chris Taylor (D-Madison) issued the following statement:

“I look forward to The State of the Tribes Address each year, as it provides an opportunity for those of us in the legislature to hear directly from the sovereign nations that we should be working with to improve the lives of Native people in our state,” said Rep. Taylor. “Native communities make up an integral part of

Wisconsin's past, present, and future, and as members of Wisconsin government, we must all do more to recognize, include, and uplift Native Americans and their contributions to our state. We must also work to undo the harm that has been inflicted on Native communities by the Wisconsin and United States governments—not just today, but every day. That is why I am so glad the flags of all eleven Native nations will be displayed in the rotunda year-round for the first time in state history. These flags will serve as a reminder to all of us that we must always prioritize the concerns of our Native nations.”