

Tribal Members:

Division, perceived or real, is nothing new. The Apostle Paul dealt with division in the Church of Corinth. He wrote: *"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,"* (1 Corinthians 1:10). The core of our issue may not be as dramatic but can be detrimental to the growth we desire nonetheless.

We are a diverse Tribe. We come from many backgrounds and therefore have interest and core values unique to each of us. However, we have at least one thing in common: We are Poarch Creek. Because we are Poarch Creek, we all want our Tribe to be successful. However, our success depends on unity. We must always strive to be unified and act as one tribal nation. We will have differences and disagree. When those instances occur, we must have respectful debate in order to reach common ground. That does not mean each member gets everything they want. It means that all decisions are made for the benefit of the entire Tribe.

When a Tribe pulls together, there are no limits to its success. The change we can make together is far greater than what a smaller group or single individual can achieve. As mentioned before, we are diverse. We are comprised of elders and youth. We have mechanics and lawyers. We live close to the reservation and far away. But, no matter our situation, we *all* have something to contribute. And, that contribution can only be fully recognized through positive participation and engagement.

History has proven that tragedies often bring people together. We have had our share of tragedies and disagreements. Such events have challenged our membership and our identities. They have stirred debate on what it means to be Poarch Creek. Such debate and discussions have caused a rift amongst some, whether we choose to accept that or not.

As your Tribal leaders, we acknowledge the existing division and are striving to do our part to build bridges across the divide. We must all consciously decide to pull together for our ancestors, our future, and our Tribe. We encourage you to put aside individual feelings of hurt and anger. Let's move towards our future together, side-by-side, the way only a family can. We may be different, but we are all one family. No matter from whom we descend, the amount of blood that runs through our veins, or where we reside, we all are proud members of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

Sincerely,

Tribal Council