

# Notes from the Chief

*What I'm working on for You*

Osiyo -

Almost a billion dollars will be invested in the coming year to improve Cherokee lives. The Cherokee Nation Tribal Council passed a historic \$934.2 million budget allocation for fiscal year 2017, the largest comprehensive budget in the history of the Cherokee Nation.

Those dollars have a direct benefit to our people. The increased annual budget means Cherokee Nation citizens and employees will see our tribal programs and services expand to meet the growing needs of our citizenry.

The fiscal year 2017 budget represents a \$167.2 million increase from last year's annual budget, and, like any good government, we plan to allocate our resources pragmatically. This extraordinary financial growth is directly attributable to the unparalleled growth of Cherokee Nation Businesses, coupled with strategic investments and a concerted and successful effort to pursue more federal grant funding opportunities.

The increase of funds will help put more citizens into new homes and jobs and help Cherokee elders and families with utility assistance, health care and child care services.

The fiscal year 2017 budget also includes the construction budget of the forthcoming health expansion at Cherokee Nation W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah. To better accommodate the more than 360,000 patient visits per year, we will soon break ground on a new facility at the Hastings campus. It will be a state-of-the-art, 450,000-square-foot facility and cost about \$170 million. Cherokee Nation Businesses has pledged \$58 million to the project after construction begins.

Year in and year out, the Cherokee Nation's excellent financial stewardship means we are able to have a positive impact on the lives of our people. It means we are building a strong foundation for a bright

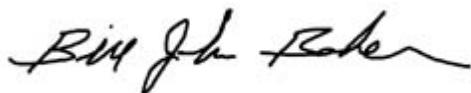
future, and that is something we, as Cherokees, can all take pride in.

We have come so far with our businesses being able to fund tribal government. I remember less than 20 years ago when the tribe's entire budget was under \$200 million and we had just over \$1 million in unearmarked dollars to use.

It is amazing where the Cherokee Nation is today. We are truly blessed, and we will continue to prosper and move forward. Our past is one of perseverance, and our future prosperity is grounded in that knowledge, history and values.

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