



SHINNECOCK INDIAN NATION

Shinnecock Indian Reservation
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Tribal Trustees

*Charles K. Smith, II, Chairman
James W. Eleazer, Jr.
Lance A. Gumbs*

March 30, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Online Live Audio: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/> **Link: Room 1324 @10 am (3/31/04)**

Written Testimony Available on www.shinnecocknation.com **@ 10 am (3/31/04)**

Contact: Beverly Jensen, Communications Officer: 631-204-9301 or 631-745-9176

Shinnecock Indian Nation Tribal Trustee to Testify Before Congress Marks the first time in over 104 years



WASHINGTON – Shinnecock Tribal Trustee Lance Gumbs will testify on Wednesday, March 31st, before the US House of Representatives' Committee on Resources. Chairmen Richard Pombo has invited Mr. Gumbs and leaders of five other Indian Nations to discuss the federal recognition process tribes must complete with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to obtain recognition from the United States Government.

“The Shinnecock Indian Nation is delighted to present our views on the federal recognition process. We consider ourselves exceptionally knowledgeable on the subject because our efforts to become federally recognized date back to 1978,” said Tribal Trustee Lance Gumbs. “The process for federal recognition is cumbersome. I hope that my testimony will help lead the way for Congress to streamline the system. For example, we are one of the oldest self-governing tribes in the country, recognized by the State of New York for over 200 years and our documentation is impeccable.”

Wednesday's hearing in Washington will mark the second time the Shinnecock Indian Nation has testified before Congress. In 1900, tribal members David Kellis and James Cuffee former Tribal Trustees, and Joshua Kellis and Nathan Cuffee told the Senate Indian Affairs Committee about the diminished sovereign right to their lands – an issue that has plagued the Shinnecock Nation and other Indian Tribes since colonial times.

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The Shinnecock Indian Nation is one of the longest, continuously self-governing tribes in the country. There are more than 1300-members of the State recognized Tribe. For more information, please visit our Web Site at Shinnecocknation.com or call our communications team at 631-204-9301 or 631-745-9176.