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House of Representatives

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Ponka-We Victors
Representative, 103rd District

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House Federal & State Affairs Committee, Representative John Barker, Chairman

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 405 and for holding this important hearing. The bill would authorize the state historical society to transfer the Shawnee Indian Cemetery located in Shawnee, KS to the Shawnee Tribe.

The sacred site is of great historical and cultural significance to the tribe. The first known burial was of a 6-year-old daughter of Joseph and Catherine Parks in 1837. The cemetery includes burial sites of Shawnee tribal leaders, including Chief Joseph Parks and Charles Silverheels, along with the second wife and children of Chief Charles Bluejacket.

Each tribal nation has their own traditions and meanings for their sacred sites. Therefore, I support the agreement that was made between the Shawnee tribe and the Kansas state historical society and return the sacred site back to its rightful owner. Thank you for your time.

Best,
Representative Dr. Ponka-We Victors-Cozad