

[PUBLIC—No. 312—68TH CONGRESS]

[H. E. 4275]

An Act Authorizing the Ponca Tribe of Indians residing in the States of Oklahoma and Nebraska to submit claims to the Court of Claims.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That all claims of whatsoever nature, both legal and equitable, which the Ponca Tribe of Indians residing in the States of Oklahoma and Nebraska may have against the United States, including among other things, claims for moneys due the Ponca Tribe but allowed or paid to some other tribe or tribes of Indians, shall be submitted to the Court of Claims, with the right of appeal by either party to the Supreme Court of the United States for determination; and jurisdiction is hereby conferred upon the Court of Claims to hear and determine any and all such claims and render final judgment thereon.

The Court of Claims shall advance the cause upon its docket for hearing, and shall have authority to determine and adjudge the rights, both legal and equitable, of the said Ponca Tribe in the premises: *Provided*, That the court shall hear and determine any legal or equitable defenses, set-offs, or counterclaims including gratuities which the United States may offer against the said Ponca Tribe notwithstanding lapse of time or statutes of limitation, and any tribe or band of Indians deemed necessary to a final determination of any suit hereunder shall be joined as the court may order. The suit or suits instituted hereunder shall be begun within five years from the passage of this Act by the Ponca Tribe of Indians as parties plaintiff against the United States as the party defendant. The petition or petitions may be verified upon information and belief as to the facts therein alleged by the attorney or attorneys employed by the Ponca Tribe under contract approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, as provided by existing law; and no other verification shall be necessary: *Provided*, That upon the final determination of such suit or suits the Court of Claims shall have jurisdiction to decree the fees to be paid to the attorney or attorneys not to exceed 10 per centum of the amount of the judgment rendered in favor of said Indians and in no event to exceed the sum of \$25,000, together with all necessary and proper expenses incurred in preparation and prosecution of the suit; and the same shall be paid out of any sum or sums found due said tribe.

Approved, January 9, 1925.