

Bill signed returning historic structure to tribe

(KNZA)--Governor Laura Kelly has signed a bill that returns a historic structure to its original, Native American owners.

Kelly this week ceremonially signed House bill 2408, which authorizes and directs the executive director of the Kansas Historical Society to transfer nearly 10-acres of land in Doniphan County to the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska.

Kelly said the legislation, which was approved by the Kansas Legislature during the 2021 session, was long-overdue. She thanked a bipartisan group of legislators and the Executive Committee of the Iowa Tribe for making the bill possible.

The property, located about two miles east of Highland, contains the Presbyterian Mission, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

It became the property of the state in 1941. Since 1963, the Kansas Historical Society has administered the property as a state historic site. In 1996, the Mission was rehabilitated as a museum to showcase the arts and history of the emigrant tribes of American Indians in northeast Kansas. The museum closed in 2008, as a result of the economic downturn.

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