

Native American Heritage Day Act of 2007 (Introduced in House)

HR 3585 IH

110th CONGRESS
1st Session
H. R. 3585

To honor the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 19, 2007

Mr. BACA (for himself, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. REYES, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SIRES, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. HONDA, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. COSTA, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. FILNER, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MITCHELL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. SHULER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Ms. LEE, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. KIND) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To honor the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the `Native American Heritage Day Act of 2007'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that--

- (1) Native Americans are the descendants of the aboriginal, indigenous, native people who were the original inhabitants of and who governed the lands that now constitute the United States;

- (2) Native Americans have volunteered to serve in the United States Armed Forces and have served with valor in all of the Nation's military actions from the Revolutionary War through the present day, and in most of those actions, more Native Americans per capita served in the Armed Forces than any other group of Americans;
- (3) Native American tribal governments developed the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and separation of governmental powers that were a model for those that form the foundation of the United States Constitution;
- (4) the Founding Fathers based the provisions of the Constitution on the unique system of democracy of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, which divided powers among the branches of government and provided for a system of checks and balances;
- (5) Native Americans have made distinct and significant contributions to the United States and the rest of the world in many fields, including agriculture, medicine, music, language, and art, and Native Americans have distinguished themselves as inventors, entrepreneurs, spiritual leaders, and scholars;
- (6) Native Americans should be recognized for their contributions to the United States as local and national leaders, artists, athletes, and scholars;
- (7) nationwide recognition of the contributions that Native Americans have made to the fabric of American society will afford an opportunity for all Americans to demonstrate their respect and admiration of Native Americans for their important contributions to the political, cultural, and economic life of the United States;
- (8) nationwide recognition of the contributions that Native Americans have made to the Nation will encourage self-esteem, pride, and self-awareness in Native Americans of all ages;
- (9) designation of the Friday following Thanksgiving of each year as Native American Heritage Day will underscore the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Native American governments;
- (10) designation of Native American Heritage Day will encourage public elementary and secondary schools in the United States to enhance understanding of Native Americans by providing curricula and classroom instruction focusing on the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the Nation; and
- (11) the Friday immediately succeeding Thanksgiving Day of each year would be an appropriate day to designate as Native American Heritage Day.

SEC. 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY.

- (a) Development of Model Educational Curricula- Educational institutions are encouraged to develop model educational curricula, in consultation with

Native American governmental leaders, for purposes of recognizing a Native American Heritage Day, emphasizing the contributions of Native Americans to the United States and the world, including--

- (1) the historical and constitutional status of Native American tribal governments as well as the present day status of Native Americans;
- (2) the cultures, traditions, and languages of Native Americans; and
- (3) the rich Native American cultural legacy that all Americans enjoy today.

(b) Celebration of Native American Heritage Day- Congress encourages the people of the United States, as well as Federal, State, and local governments and interested groups and organizations to observe a Native American Heritage Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.