

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1852

To designate the Friday after Thanksgiving of each year as “Native American Heritage Day” in honor of the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 23, 2007

Mr. INOUE (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. AKAKA, and Mr. STEVENS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To designate the Friday after Thanksgiving of each year as “Native American Heritage Day” in honor of the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Native American Her-
5 itage Day Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

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

5 (2) Native Americans have volunteered to serve
6 in the United States Armed Forces and have served
7 with valor in all of the Nation's military actions
8 from the Revolutionary War through the present
9 day, and in most of those actions, more Native
10 Americans per capita served in the Armed Forces
11 than any other group of Americans;

12 (3) Native American tribal governments devel-
13 oped the fundamental principles of freedom of
14 speech and separation of governmental powers that
15 were a model for those that form the foundation of
16 the United States Constitution;

17 (4) the Founding Fathers based the provisions
18 of the Constitution on the unique system of democ-
19 racy of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy,
20 which divided powers among the branches of govern-
21 ment and provided for a system of checks and bal-
22 ances;

23 (5) Native Americans have made distinct and
24 significant contributions to the United States and
25 the rest of the world in many fields, including agri-

1 culture, medicine, music, language, and art, and Na-
2 tive Americans have distinguished themselves as in-
3 ventors, entrepreneurs, spiritual leaders, and schol-
4 ars;

5 (6) Native Americans should be recognized for
6 their contributions to the United States as local and
7 national leaders, artists, athletes, and scholars;

8 (7) nationwide recognition of the contributions
9 that Native Americans have made to the fabric of
10 American society will afford an opportunity for all
11 Americans to demonstrate their respect and admira-
12 tion of Native Americans for their important con-
13 tributions to the political, cultural, and economic life
14 of the United States;

15 (8) nationwide recognition of the contributions
16 that Native Americans have made to the Nation will
17 encourage self-esteem, pride, and self-awareness in
18 Native Americans of all ages;

19 (9) designation of the Friday following Thanks-
20 giving of each year as Native American Heritage
21 Day will underscore the government-to-government
22 relationship between the United States and Native
23 American governments; and

24 (10) designation of Native American Heritage
25 Day will encourage public elementary and secondary

1 schools in the United States to enhance under-
2 standing of Native Americans by providing curricula
3 and classroom instruction focusing on the achieve-
4 ments and contributions of Native Americans to the
5 Nation.

6 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE**
7 **DAY.**

8 The Friday immediately succeeding Thanksgiving
9 Day of each year shall be known as Native American Her-
10 itage Day.

11 **SEC. 4. CELEBRATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE**
12 **DAY.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Congress encourages the people of
14 the United States, as well as Federal, State, and local gov-
15 ernments and interested groups and organizations to ob-
16 serve Native American Heritage Day with appropriate
17 programs, ceremonies, and activities, including activities
18 related to—

19 (1) the historical and constitutional status of
20 Native American tribal governments as well as the
21 present day status of Native Americans;

22 (2) the cultures, traditions, and languages of
23 Native Americans; and

24 (3) the rich Native American cultural legacy
25 that all Americans enjoy today.

1 (b) NATIVE AMERICAN.—For purposes of this Act,
2 the term “Native American” has the meaning given such
3 term by section 16(10) of the National Museum of the
4 American Indian Act (20 U.S.C. 80q–14(10)).

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