

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY PASSED INTO LAW

Friday after Thanksgiving will be designated as day of tribute

WASHINGTON – The National Indian Gaming Association acknowledges the passing into law of H. J. Res. 62, which designates the Friday after Thanksgiving as Native American Heritage Day 2008.

The Native American Heritage Day 2008 Bill, which is supported by the National Indian Gaming Association, National Congress of American Indians, (NCAI) and Indian tribes across the country, encourages the people of the United States, as well as the federal, state and local governments and interested groups and organizations to observe Native American Heritage Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities. The Resolution was introduced by Congressman Joe Baca (D-CA) and Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) who helped move the Resolution through the Senate.

NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. said, “This is a great moment for Indian country. Signing this bill into law officially recognizes, remembers and formally celebrates the history, achievements and certainly the major contributions to the American democracy by Native America.

“This law encourages the United States to honor Native America by celebrating Native American Heritage Day in all of your communities as a way to create stronger public awareness and understanding of Indian country, our culture, traditions, language and the strength, honor and patriotism, of our people.”

Chairman Stevens praised Congressman Baca and Senator Inouye who were instrumental in the passage of this act in the 110th Congress. He also commended the efforts of NCAI and President Joe Garcia for joining NIGA in this effort.

The Native American Heritage Day Act 2008

- Designates Friday, November 28, 2008, as Native American Heritage Day
- Encourages the people of the United States, as well as federal, state and local governments and interested groups and organizations, to observe such day with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities, including activities related to:
 - The historical status of Native American tribal governments as well as the present day status of Native Americans;
 - Native American cultures, traditions and languages; and
 - The rich Native American cultural legacy

Presidents, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush signed proclamations designating the month of November as Native American Heritage Month in previous years. Passage and signing H.J. Res. 62, establishes into law for the year 2008 an official day of remembrance and recognition of Native Americans.

NIGA Executive Director Mark Van Norman said, “Native Americans have been seeking a day of recognition since 1912. This day honors the original Native Americans, their strengths, wisdom and fight for freedom, and it recognizes the continued vitality and beauty of the Native American cultures.”

H. J. Res. 62: Native American Heritage Day Act of 2008

Overview

Sponsor: [Rep. Joe Baca \[D-CA\]](#) [show cosponsors \(83\)](#)

Bill Text: [Summary](#) | [Full Text](#)

Status:

- ✔ Introduced Nov 13, 2007
- ✔ Reported by Committee Apr 24, 2008
- ✔ Passed House [\[details\]](#) Nov 13, 2007
- ✔ Passed Senate Sep 22, 2008
- ✔ Signed by President Oct 8, 2008

This bill has become law. [Last Updated: Nov 17, 2008]

Last Action: Oct 8, 2008: Became Public Law No: 110-370.

This bill is identical to [H.R. 3585](#) (Status: Introduced).

One Hundred Tenth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Thursday,
the third day of January, two thousand and eight*

Joint Resolution

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

Resolved 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 2008”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Native Americans are the descendants of the aboriginal, indigenous, native people who were the original inhabitants of 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 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;

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

(5) 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;

(6) 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;

(7) 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; and

(8) designation of Native American Heritage Day will encourage public elementary and secondary schools in the

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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.

SEC. 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY.

Congress—

(1) designates Friday, November 28, 2008, as “Native American Heritage Day”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States, as well as Federal, State, and local governments, and interested groups and organizations to observe Native American Heritage Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, including activities relating to—

(A) the historical status of Native American tribal governments as well as the present day status of Native Americans;

(B) the cultures, traditions, and languages of Native Americans; and

(C) the rich Native American cultural legacy that all Americans enjoy today.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

*Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.*