

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6078

As Reported by House Committee On:
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to recognizing "Native American Heritage Day".

Brief Description: Recognizing "Native American Heritage Day."

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Governmental Operations (originally sponsored by Senators McCoy, Kohl-Welles and Conway).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 2/26/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Names the state legal and school holiday on the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day as "Native American Heritage Day."

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; Sawyer, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Robinson, Santos and Young.

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The state currently observes nine legal and school holidays, that are designated for some commemorative distinction, including: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Declaration of Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. The day immediately following Thanksgiving Day is also a legal and school holiday, but has no corresponding name or distinction.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2009 Congress passed a joint resolution that designated the Friday after Thanksgiving Day as "Native American Heritage Day" and encouraged federal, state, and local governments to observe the date in honor of Native American history, traditions and culture. In 2013 President Barack Obama proclaimed November 2013 as "Native American Heritage Month" and called upon all Americans to celebrate November 29, 2013, the day after Thanksgiving, as "Native American Heritage Day."

There are 29 federally recognized tribes in the state. There are other tribal communities in the state that are not federally recognized and individuals who claim Native American ancestry who may or may not be enrolled members of a tribe.

Summary of Bill:

The legal and school holiday on the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day is named "Native American Heritage Day."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill is part of a national movement to recognize "Native American Heritage Day" on the fourth Friday in November in all the states. It sends a positive message to tribal and non-tribal people and, hopefully, will encourage the celebration of Native American cultural events on this day of recognition.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator McCoy, prime sponsor; and Craig Engelking, Quinault, Lummi, Tulalip, Stillaguamish and Umatilla Tribes.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.