

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1014

As of March 18, 2013

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

Brief Description: Recognizing "Native American Heritage Day."

Sponsors: Representatives McCoy, Appleton, Hunt, Hurst, Moscoso, Ryu, Sells, Dahlquist, Johnson, Zeiger, Fitzgibbon, Wilcox, Stanford, Hudgins, Haigh, Tharinger, Van De Wege, Morrell, Ormsby, Upthegrove, Pollet, Bergquist, Reykdal, Kochmar, Jinkins, O'Ban and Santos.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/20/13, 93-4.

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 3/14/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: Native Americans in Washington. There are 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington. In the 2010 federal census, over 89,000 state residents identified themselves as American Indian or Alaska Native.

Washington Legal Holidays. Sunday and the following ten days are state legal and school holidays: New Year's Day, January 1; Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the third Monday in January; Presidents' Day, the third Monday in February; Memorial Day, the last Monday in May; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, the first Monday in September; Veterans' Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Thursday in November; the day immediately following Thanksgiving Day; and Christmas Day, December 25. Washington law also designates several other days honoring particular individuals, groups, events, and principles, but they are not state legal or school holidays. None specifically recognize or honor Native American heritage.

Other States and the Federal Government. Two states have designated days honoring Native American heritage as state legal holidays: South Dakota, the second Monday in October; and Maryland, the Friday after Thanksgiving Day. Alabama has designated the second Monday in October, a state legal holiday, as American Indian Heritage Day, Columbus Day, and Fraternal Day.

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.

Other states have designated days, weeks, or months honoring Native Americans, but not as state holidays, including the following: Wyoming, the second Friday in May; Arkansas, the third week in September; California, New Jersey, and Ohio, the fourth Friday in September; Montana, the last Friday in September; Rhode Island, September 24; Kentucky, the month of November; Oklahoma, the third Monday in November; Virginia, the month of November and the Wednesday immediately preceding Thanksgiving; and West Virginia, the week beginning the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

The federal government has occasionally designated days honoring Native American heritage, but not as federal legal holidays. In 2008, President George W. Bush signed a congressional resolution designating Friday, November 28, 2008, as Native American Heritage Day. Since 2009, President Barack Obama has annually proclaimed November as National Native American Heritage Month and the day after Thanksgiving as Native American Heritage Day.

Summary of Bill: The existing Washington legal holiday on the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day is recognized as Native American Heritage Day.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is brought to the Legislature with the encouragement of the 29 tribes in the state. The fourth Friday in November has traditionally been recognized by tribes across the United States as Native American day. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation support this legislation. This is a holiday that all Washingtonians can be proud to celebrate. It appropriately recognizes Washington's Native American heritage.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative McCoy, prime sponsor; Miguel Perez Gibson, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.