

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6078

C 177 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Recognizing "Native American Heritage Day."

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

Senate Committee on Governmental Operations
House Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

Background: There are 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington. In the 2010 federal census, approximately 90,000 state residents identified themselves as American Indian or Alaska Native.

Sunday and the following ten days are Washington 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.

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. Eleven other states have designated days, weeks, or months honoring Native Americans, but not as state holidays.

The federal government has occasionally designated days honoring Native American heritage, but not as federal legal holidays. 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: The existing unnamed state legal and school holiday on the Friday immediately following the fourth Thursday in November, Thanksgiving Day, is recognized as Native American Heritage 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.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0
House	93	5

Effective: June 12, 2014