
**State Government & Tribal Relations
Committee**

HB 2751

Brief Description: Concerning tribal-state relations.

Sponsors: Representatives Pettigrew, DeBolt, Lekanoff, Maycumber, Fitzgibbon, Rude, Chapman, Tharinger, Pollet and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Joint Committee on Tribal-State Relations.
- Recognizes the third Monday in November as Washington State Tribes and Treaties Day.

Hearing Date: 2/4/20

Staff: Carrington Skinner (786-7192).

Background:

There are 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington, as well as several other tribes and individuals who claim Native American ancestry who may or may not be enrolled members of a tribe.

Tribes are recognized by federal law as sovereign governments with inherent powers of self-governance, including the power to regulate within tribal territory and certain immunity from state authority. In the 1850s the federal government entered into a series of treaties with tribes within the Washington Territory. In the treaties, the tribes ceded their interest in portions of the territory to the federal government in exchange for monetary compensation, certain lands reserved for their exclusive use, and other rights.

In 1989 the Governor and federally recognized tribes signed the Centennial Accord (Accord). This agreement sought to achieve mutual goals through a framework for communication and

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resolution of issues between the sovereign governments. In 1999, a state and tribal leadership summit sought to formalize consultation and dispute resolution processes through a set of implementation guidelines, resulting in the New Millennium Agreement.

Legislation passed in 2012 set standards for the Governor and state agencies in establishing government-to-government relationships with federally recognized tribes. These requirements include:

- state agencies must make reasonable efforts to collaborate with tribes;
- state agencies must designate a tribal liaison; and
- the Governor and other statewide elected officials must meet at least once a year with tribal leaders to address issues of mutual concern.

Washington recognizes 10 specific days and all Sundays as state legal holidays, including Independence Day, Native American Heritage Day, and Christmas Day. Another 17 specific days are recognized by the Legislature, but are not considered legal holidays. These days include Korean-American Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, and Public Lands Day.

Summary of Bill:

The Joint Committee on Tribal-State Relations (Committee) is established as part of the legislative branch of state government. The Committee's duties include serving as a forum for government-to-government communications and fostering the resolution of issues of mutual concern between tribes and the state.

The Committee consists of:

- four members from each of the two largest caucuses appointed by the President of the Senate;
- four members from each of the two largest caucuses appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- one member from the Association of Washington Tribes, appointed by the Governor.

The Committee is headed by two co-chairs. It must hold two meetings per year, one of which must correspond with the Governor's annual Accord meeting and the other scheduled in collaboration with the Association of Washington Tribes. Executive offices and agencies must cooperate with the Committee and provide information as requested by the co-chairs. By December 15 of each year, the Committee must submit a report on its activities, findings, and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

The third Monday of November is legislatively recognized as Washington State Tribes and Treaties Day.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 2010.

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