

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 446 Session of 2013

INTRODUCED BY V. BROWN, VEREB, KIRKLAND, MIRANDA, SONNEY, PARKER, KIM, O'BRIEN, ROSS, CUTLER, GODSHALL, CLAY, HENNESSEY, DIGIROLAMO, BROWNLEE, CRUZ, MILLARD, KINSEY, KORTZ, READSHAW, K. BOYLE, SWANGER, CALTAGIRONE, FREEMAN, COHEN, PAINTER, MAJOR, MURT, MAHONEY, WATSON, GINGRICH AND FLECK, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

A RESOLUTION

1 Congratulating and recognizing Pennsylvania's American Indian
 2 peoples and communities and recognizing the first Saturday in
 3 October of every year as "Indigenous Peoples Day" in
 4 Pennsylvania.

5 WHEREAS, The indigenous peoples of North America, the first
 6 Americans, have woven rich and diverse threads into the tapestry
 7 of the heritage and history of the United States and this
 8 Commonwealth and throughout their history in this great land,
 9 they have faced moments of triumph and tragedy alike; and

10 WHEREAS, American Indians have inhabited the land, which is
 11 now known as Pennsylvania, dating back some 5,000 years; and

12 WHEREAS, Former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Historical and
 13 Museum Commission, Dr. George P. Donehoo, acknowledged that, "No
 14 state in the entire nation is richer in Indian names or in fact
 15 Indian history than Pennsylvania."; and

16 WHEREAS, Some of the many great nations that inhabited the

1 territory known as Pennsylvania were and are the Lenape,
2 Cherokee, Susquehanna, Unami, Minsi, Minquas, Erie, Muscogee,
3 Mohawk, Huron, Allegany, Shawnee, Susquehannock, Oneida,
4 Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, Wyandot, Chippewa, Mississauga and
5 Ottawa Indians, as well as many others who sustained themselves
6 in the natural environment of the Keystone State; and

7 WHEREAS, Precolonial Indian villages and ancient burial
8 mounds, which were plentiful and spread en masse across the
9 territory now known as Pennsylvania, were destroyed or lost due
10 to agricultural development and industrialization; and

11 WHEREAS, McKees Rocks Mound in McKeesport is one of those
12 ancient burial mounds in this Commonwealth that stands as a
13 testament to the highly civilized societies of indigenous
14 American peoples and is reported as one of the oldest places of
15 human habitation in eastern North America; and

16 WHEREAS, Many of Pennsylvania's busiest highways, such as
17 Route 1, Route 40, Route 30, Route 611 and Route 590 started as
18 American Indian paths that were used for trade and hunting; and

19 WHEREAS, American Indian culture and society have contributed
20 to the agricultural development, medicinal discoveries,
21 environmental preservation, commerce, governmental institutions
22 and structure and many other facets of our country, State and
23 cities; and

24 WHEREAS, Many American Indian peoples live in our urban
25 cities, including 4,000 in Philadelphia and more than 81,092 in
26 Pennsylvania according to the 2010 Census; and

27 WHEREAS, Many of the American Indians living in our counties,
28 cities, towns and boroughs have gone through great adversities
29 to maintain their cultural and ethnic identities; and

30 WHEREAS, Many southern and northern American Indians in the

1 early 1800s through the 1900s were mislabeled "colored,"
2 "Negro," "mulatto" and "white," resulting in the dilution of
3 their identities; and

4 WHEREAS, Many have persevered through trauma and tragedy to
5 preserve culture and traditions to be beacons of light for
6 future generations; and

7 WHEREAS, American Indian culture and American Indians,
8 indigenous peoples, are to be respected and honored; and

9 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth acknowledges the importance of
10 educating the citizens of this Commonwealth about the heritage,
11 history, art, archeology and traditions of the American Indian
12 peoples and communities in Pennsylvania; and

13 WHEREAS, American Indians continue to contribute to the
14 culture of this Commonwealth through the ancestral preservation
15 of their heritage; and

16 WHEREAS, Their dedicated efforts to honor their proud
17 heritage assist in developing a deeper understanding within this
18 Commonwealth of the vibrant and ancient customs of the
19 indigenous peoples living in this Commonwealth today; and

20 WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples Day notes the influences of
21 indigenous culture throughout our history; and

22 WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples Day commemorates the
23 contributions and resilience of indigenous communities and
24 celebrates preservation of their unique cultural heritage and
25 ethnic identities; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives congratulate and
27 recognize the many contributions of American Indians, recognize
28 the strong and living traditions of the first peoples to call
29 our land home and look forward to working with American Indians
30 in the future and appreciate their future contributions to our

1 Commonwealth; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
3 first Saturday in October of every year as "Indigenous Peoples
4 Day" in Pennsylvania.