
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 552 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY V. BROWN, MILLARD, VEREB, BOYLE AND YOUNGBLOOD,
OCTOBER 20, 2015

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
OCTOBER 20, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring and recognizing Pennsylvania's Native American peoples
2 and communities and recognizing the first Saturday in October
3 of every year, which this year is October 2, 2015, as
4 "Indigenous Peoples Day" in 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 have faced moments of triumph and tragedy alike; and

10 WHEREAS, Native Americans have inhabited the land which is
11 now known as Pennsylvania for 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
17 territory known as Pennsylvania were and are the Lenape,
18 Cherokee, Susquehanna, Erie, Mohawk, Huron, Allegany, Shawnee,

1 Susquehannock, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Chippewa and Ottawa
2 Indians, as well as many others who sustained themselves in the
3 natural environment of the Keystone State; and

4 WHEREAS, Precolonial Native American villages and ancient
5 burial mounds, which were plentiful and spread en masse across
6 the territory now known as Pennsylvania, were destroyed or lost
7 due to agricultural development and industrialization; and

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

13 WHEREAS, Many of Pennsylvania's busiest highways, such as
14 Route 1, Route 40, Route 30, Route 611 and Route 590 started as
15 Native American paths that were used for trade and hunting; and

16 WHEREAS, Native American culture and society have contributed
17 to the agricultural development, medicinal discoveries,
18 environmental preservation, commerce, governmental institutions
19 and structure and many other facets of our country, State and
20 cities; and

21 WHEREAS, According to the 2010 census, many Native American
22 peoples live in our urban cities, including 4,000 residents in
23 Philadelphia and more than 81,092 residents in Pennsylvania; and

24 WHEREAS, Many of the Native Americans living in our counties,
25 cities, townships, boroughs and towns have gone through great
26 adversities to maintain their cultural and ethnic identities;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, From the 1800s through the 1900s, many southern and
29 northern Native Americans were mislabeled "colored," "Negro,"
30 "mulatto" and "white," resulting from the dilution of their

1 identities; and

2 WHEREAS, Many have persevered through trauma and tragedy to
3 preserve culture and traditions to become beacons of light for
4 future generations; and

5 WHEREAS, Native American culture and Native Americans are to
6 be respected and honored; and

7 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth acknowledges the importance of
8 educating the residents of this Commonwealth about the heritage,
9 history, art, archeology and traditions of the Native American
10 peoples and communities in Pennsylvania; and

11 WHEREAS, Native Americans continue to contribute to the
12 culture of this Commonwealth through the ancestral preservation
13 of their heritage; and

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

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

21 WHEREAS, "Indigenous Peoples Day" commemorates the
22 contributions and resiliency of indigenous communities while
23 also celebrating the preservation of their unique cultural
24 heritage and ethnic identities; therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
26 first Saturday in October of every year, which this year is
27 October 2, 2015, as "Indigenous Peoples Day" in Pennsylvania;
28 and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize and
30 honor the myriad of contributions of Native Americans, recognize

1 the strong and living traditions of the first peoples to call
2 our land home and look forward to working with Native Americans
3 in an effort to further preserve their heritage within this
4 Commonwealth.