



110 Maryland Ave. NE
Suite 104
Washington, DC 20002
www.niea.org
(202) 544-7290

NIEA RESOLUTION 07-05

TITLE: TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING "NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY" ON THE FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING IN HONOR OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICANS TO THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserves or non---reserved homelands ; and

WHEREAS, Indian Tribes are governments that pre---date the United States, and through the Indian Commerce, Treaty and Apportionment Clauses and the 14th Amendment, the United States recognizes the status of Indian Tribes as sovereigns and the status of American Indians as tribal citizens;

WHEREAS, Native American tribal governments developed the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and separation of powers that form the foundation of the United States Government; and

WHEREAS, The Founding Fathers came to the Six Nations Confederacy in New York to learn about their unique system of democratic confederacy, which divided powers among the branches of government and provided a checks and balances.

WHEREAS, Native Americans have made distinct and important contributions to the United States and the rest of the world in many fields, including agriculture, medicine, music, language, and art, and they have distinguished themselves as inventors, entrepreneurs, spiritual leaders, and scholars; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans deserve to be recognized for their individual contributions to the United States as local and national leaders, artists, athletes, and scholars; and

WHEREAS, nationwide recognition of the contributions of Native Americans to the United States will encourage self---esteem, pride, and self---awareness in Native Americans about the significant role their

ancestors and heritage have played in the formation of the freest country in the world, the United States; and

WHEREAS, per capita, Native Americans have a higher rate of service in the United States military than any other group and have served with valor in all of the Nation's wars from the Revolutionary War through Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of "Native American Heritage Day" will allow Americans of all backgrounds to demonstrate their respect of and admiration for Native Americans for the richness of their contributions to the political, cultural, and economic life of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of "Native American Heritage Day" will further demonstrate a strong united government---to---government relationship between each of the Native American Nations and the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of "Native American Heritage Day" will encourage public elementary and secondary schools in the United States to enhance understanding of Native Americans by providing classroom instruction focusing on their achievements and contributions to the United States; and

WHEREAS, currently the Federal Government recognizes November as Native American Heritage Month;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION hereby support the S. 1852 and H.R. 3585 legislation by the United States Congress establishing the Friday after Thanksgiving as "Native American Heritage Day."