



NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION

Rebuilding Communities Through Indian Self-Reliance

NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION #1-PHX-AM-4-15-09

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 Gaming Association (NIGA) is an intertribal association of 184 federally recognized Indian Tribes established to support Indian gaming and defend Indian sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, Indian Tribes are sovereigns that pre-date the United States, with prior and treaty protected rights to self-government and to our Indian lands, and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States, through the Treaty, Commerce, and Apportionment Clauses and the 14th Amendment, recognizes the sovereign status of Indian Tribes as Native nations established prior to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (the “IGRA”) acknowledged and confirmed the inherent sovereign powers of Tribal Governments; and

WHEREAS, Indian tribes are governments that pre-date the United States and through the Indian Commerce Clause, Treaty Clause, and the Apportionment Clause, the Constitution of the United States recognizes the status of Indian Tribes as sovereigns; and

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; and

WHEREAS, during the 110th Congress Senator Inouye and Representative Baca introduced legislation to establish Native American Heritage Day as a national day of recognition; and

WHEREAS, President Bush signed H.J. Res 62 into law on October 8, 2008, creating Public law 110-370; and

WHEREAS, On March 12, 2009, Representative Baca introduced H.J. Res. 40, the Native American Heritage day Act of 2009; and

WHEREAS, H.J. Res. 40 was referred to the Natural Resources Committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NIGA does hereby support the introduction and passage of legislation to the United State Congress establishing the Friday after Thanksgiving as "Native American Heritage Day."