

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1228

Title: AN ACT DESIGNATING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY AS A LEGAL HOLIDAY.

Vote Date: 2/28/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/7/2025

File No.:

Disclaimer: *The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee
Rep. Andre Bumgardner, 41st Dist.
Rep. Anthony Nolan, 39th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would seek designate a legal holiday as known as Indigenous Peoples Day. There is a growing sentiment in the Country and State to honor the contributions indigenous people have made to our culture and society. This would also help highlight the discrimination and issues indigenous people still face today.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Cathy Osten, Senator, 19th Senate District:

A dozen states have already established and Indigenous Peoples Day to recognize the contributions made to our society by Native Americans. The day would help bring attention to the discrimination of Native Americans and their lands. There is a day known as Native American Heritage Day which is the Friday after thanksgiving.

Jody Cummings, General Council, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe:

We applaud this movement to honor and recognize the diverse cultures and histories of Indigenous people as well as their contributions. Adding this day promotes a more inclusive understanding of history and recognizes the resilience, wisdom, beauty and contributions of Indigenous communities. It also will promote cultural understanding.

Mohegan Tribal Leadership:

Indigenous people have made significant contributions to our state and designating this as legal holiday is a powerful gesture of recognition and respect. All citizens will have the opportunity to honor indigenous people and celebrate their heritage and learn from their experiences.

Chief Richard Velky, Schaghticoke Tribal Nation:

As one of Connecticut's first people we thank Mother Earth and are blessed by the Creator for all that has been bestowed upon us. In 1988 Governor, William A. O'Neill proclaimed "Indian Day" as September 30th, 1988. He officially recognized the Connecticut tribes and their knowledge, customs, and ideals as an important part of our heritage. I have submitted in my testimony the proclamation.

Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc:

As a close partner of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribal Nation we support their recognition through the creation of a legal holiday.

Wener, Oyanadel, Policy Director the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equality and Opportunity:

This is a crucial step toward honoring the rich histories, cultures and contributions of Native American Communities. The stories and resilience of Indigenous people have been overshadowed and this designation provides an opportunity to ensure that their legacy will be properly recognized and celebrated.

Danielle Brochu, Registered Nurse:

Indigenous People have a rich history, are resourceful and diverse people who have had their history erased through colonization and systemic racism. Many Native Americans struggle to keep their heritage, faith and traditions alive. Legally recognizing this holiday is a way to offer respect to Native Americans past, present and future.

The following also submitted testimony in support:

Sarah Baillageon
Alison Coreia
Daria Correia
Brianna Costello
Lorayna Hinton
Amy Supiani
Joseph Marsocci
Katherine OMelia
Maurice Parker
Jack Potter
Rachel Schlaare

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Ann Marie Conaty:

We do not need another State Holiday that is paid by taxpayers and close down services for another day for state taxpayers. Be fiscally responsible.

Kenneth Finn:

The bill serves no fiscal or legislative purpose. It would add to the expensed of operating the government buy shutting off services.

Barbara Kovacs:

"This should not be a state holiday, Let the indigenous people celebrate on their own, as those of Irish Heritage do on St. Patrick's Day."

Lee Sirotnak:

It is ridiculous to add more holidays to an already bloated State Employee paid calendar that decreases availability of services and increases costs to taxpayers. Unless you combine it with another holiday and then not increasing the paid holidays.

The following also submitted testimony in opposition:

Debbie Esposito

Robert Mazzotta

Anonymous

Reported by: Pamela Bianca

Date: March 6, 2025