

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 98

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 134

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 98—Relative to Native Americans.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 21, 1998.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 98, Baca. Native Americans Awareness Day.

This measure would recognize the 4th Friday in September as Native Americans Awareness Day.

WHEREAS, Native Americans were among the earliest settlers of the territory of the United States, which is a land with an expansive and beautiful landscape of forests, prairies, mountains, valleys, deserts, and plateaus; and

WHEREAS, This Earth has been home to millions of native people since the beginning of known time; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans believe that they emerged into life and movement out of and into this place, and their rich oral narratives offer an ancient voice to life in this land before the arrival of immigrants from Europe, Africa, and Asia; and

WHEREAS, Long before the voyages of Christopher Columbus or the development of the first English settlement at Jamestown, diverse Native American groups and tribes developed their own language, literature, history, government, dance, music, art, agriculture, and architecture; and

WHEREAS, Native American languages were sophisticated and rich in words that denoted unique elements of Native American culture such as snowshoes, toboggans, tobacco, sun goggles, hammocks, and other items; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 300 different languages existed in the area that is now the United States and Canada, and there were many other dialects of these original languages; and

WHEREAS, Many Native Americans still speak their native languages, thus enriching the vocabularies of all peoples; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans gave our country words such as Massachusetts, Mississippi, Alabama, Ohio, Iowa, Dakota, Oklahoma, and Wyoming, and Native American languages also included a variety of words for agricultural produce native to this land, including, but not limited to, corn, squash, beans, potato, tomato, peanut, pumpkin, and watermelon; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans developed the first agricultural processes of our nation, including irrigation farming that made the deserts, prairies, and plateaus blossom with abundance; and

WHEREAS, The first literature and history of this land originated from ancient stories about plant, animal, mountain, river, and lake “peoples” who interacted with each other at the beginning of time to make the world ready for human beings, and those stories remain a part of American culture to this day; and

WHEREAS, Rabbit, Coyote, Wolf, Bear, Mountain Lion, Eagle, Raven, and a host of other stories appear in Native American literature, and that literature speaks to us about a creative time that was and is a part of the collective past of the United States; and

WHEREAS, In ancient songs, Native Americans still sing of the creative time, and songs of mountains, rocks, rivers, lakes, forests, and birds ring out across the land to this very day; and

WHEREAS, It is through song, dance, and music that people recreate their attachment to the land they consider sacred, and that they believe was placed here at the beginning of time by a great and wondrous spirit that is manifested to this day in our country; and

WHEREAS, Native American forms of art and architecture have influenced our nation’s heritage, and longhouses, quonsets, A-framed lodges, pueblos, hogans, tepees, and others are a part of the unique American experience; and

WHEREAS, Beadwork, quillwork, sculpture, painting, rock art, bows, arrows, quivers, dresses, leggings, coats, baskets, jewelry, and many other art forms emerged out of the Native American tradition and are still highly prized in our nation today; and

WHEREAS, For thousands of years before the arrival of other groups of settlers, Native Americans established intricate modes of transportation, communication, and commerce, and some of those forms of transportation, communication, and commerce spanned huge portions of North America from California to Texas, Washington to Minnesota, Oregon to Missouri, Louisiana to South Carolina, and Wisconsin to New York; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans established trails that are still used today as interstate, state, and county highways, and merchants, farmers, artists, hunters, and musicians used these and other arteries of travel to support their families and people; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans continue to traverse these routes, and remember through stories, songs, and music the significance of places and peoples that have affected their lives; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans have enjoyed many forms of government, and they continue to revere the principals that they have always held so dear to their cultures; and

WHEREAS, An emphasis on freedom, justice, patriotism, and representative government have always been elements of Native



American culture, and Native Americans have shown their willingness to fight and die for this nation in foreign lands; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans honor the American flag at every pow wow and at many gatherings, and remember veterans through song, music, and dance; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans use songs to honor the men and women of this country who have fought for freedom; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans love the land that has nurtured their parents, grandparents, and unnamed elders since time began, and they honor the Earth that has brought life to the people since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans have given much to the United States, and in recognition of this fact, it is fitting that we return the honor and recognize Native Americans for all of their offerings to this beloved land; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring,* That the Legislature of the State of California recognizes the fourth Friday in September as Native Americans Awareness Day; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

