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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1814 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY RABB, BRIGGS, HADDOCK, MAYES, MADDEN AND SANCHEZ,  
NOVEMBER 2, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

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AN ACT

1 Designating the second Monday in October each year as Indigenous  
2 Peoples' Day in this Commonwealth.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Indigenous  
7 Peoples' Day Act.

8 Section 2. Legislative findings.

9 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

10 (1) Millions of indigenous people inhabited the land  
11 that makes up this Commonwealth prior to European settlement.

12 (2) The Doctrine of Discovery enabled Christian  
13 explorers to wrongfully seize lands inhabited by indigenous  
14 people and subjected indigenous people to brutality.

15 (3) European exploration and settlement adversely  
16 impacted indigenous populations, devastated natural resources  
17 and initiated the slave trade.

18 (4) Indigenous people suffered discrimination and

1 oppression as a result of European exploration and  
2 settlement.

3 (5) This Commonwealth exists on the tribal lands of the  
4 Erie, Haudenosaunee, Lenape, Munsee, Shawnee and  
5 Susquehannock.

6 (6) The Treaty of Shackamaxon between William Penn and  
7 the Lenape sought to cultivate an alliance and friendship.

8 (7) The Treaty of Shackamaxon was broken within a  
9 generation.

10 (8) From the early 19th through the mid-20th centuries,  
11 indigenous children were taken from their homes and sent to  
12 Indian Residential Schools, such as the Carlisle Indian  
13 Industrial School, which perpetuated cultural genocide of  
14 indigenous youth through forced "Americanization" that  
15 included the abandonment of language, tradition, names and  
16 identities.

17 (9) The Snyder Act of 1924, which gave indigenous  
18 peoples born in the United States full citizenship, was an  
19 important step in guaranteeing the right to vote for  
20 indigenous people.

21 (10) It is vital to honor the sacrifice, culture,  
22 tradition and contributions of the indigenous people of this  
23 Commonwealth and of North America.

24 (11) We must build and strengthen connections with the  
25 communities and tribes of indigenous people in this  
26 Commonwealth.

27 Section 3. Designation.

28 The second Monday in October each year is designated as  
29 Indigenous Peoples' Day in this Commonwealth.

30 Section 4. Construction.

1        Nothing in this act shall be construed as requiring an  
2 employer to treat the second Monday in October as a legal or  
3 official holiday or to provide paid leave to an employee on the  
4 second Monday in October solely by virtue of the date being  
5 designated under this act.

6 Section 5. Effective date.

7        This act shall take effect immediately.