

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 148

Supporting the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day in bringing attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage through education.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 21, 2023

Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. CARSON, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. SABLAN, and Ms. TITUS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day in bringing attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage through education.

Whereas the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established International Mother Language Day on November 17, 1999, to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism;

Whereas the annual International Mother Language Day celebration date, February 21, was chosen to commemorate the day in 1952 in Bangladesh when students died demonstrating for recognition of Bengali as a national language of Pakistan;

Whereas UNESCO establishes a different theme for the annual celebration of International Mother Language Day each year, promoting various aspects of linguistic education;

Whereas 2022 marked the first year of UNESCO’s Decade of Indigenous Languages, intended to raise awareness of the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize, and celebrate them;

Whereas according to the UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger, out of the over 7,000 existing languages in the world, at least 230 have become extinct since 1950, approximately 2,473 other languages are classified as “endangered”, and approximately 3,000 languages could disappear before the end of the century;

Whereas the United States Census Bureau has identified approximately 350 languages spoken in the United States, at least 150 of which are distinct Native North American languages;

Whereas according to the UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger, 280 Native North American languages were spoken in the continental United States when the Europeans arrived and more than 115 are already extinct, with many more critically endangered; and

Whereas the United States enjoys a rich and diverse cultural heritage and preserving existing languages is an essential piece to preserving this heritage: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of Inter-
- 3 national Mother Language Day; and

1 (2) encourages the people of the United States
2 to observe International Mother Language Day with
3 appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

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