

# South Dakota Legislature



## Senate Commemoration 824

Introduced by: **Senators** Foster, Castleberry, Nesiba, Schoenbeck, and Stalzer and **Representatives** Perry and Pourier

**A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Honoring the life and public service of former State Senator Theresa "Huck" Two Bulls, "Wiyaka Tokaheya Yuha Najin," the first Native American woman elected to the South Dakota State Senate.**

WHEREAS, Theresa Two Bulls was born October 23, 1949. She grew up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, graduated from Pine Ridge High School in 1967, and earned a degree in law from Haskell Indian University in 1969. She thereafter became a trailblazer, a persistent voice for the Oglala Nation, and an avid protector of Native American voting rights; and

WHEREAS, Theresa's passion in life was service to South Dakotans, in addition to being a mother, wife, grandmother, sister, mentor, and friend. She demonstrated all the qualities of being a good relative and leader for all her Oceti Sakowin relatives; and

WHEREAS, Theresa was elected to four terms as a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council from 1990-1998 and served as the Oglala Sioux Tribe's Vice-President from 2000-2002; and

WHEREAS, Theresa served as a prosecutor for the South Dakota Attorney General's Office before being elected as a South Dakota senator in 2004; and

WHEREAS, Theresa served on the State-Tribal Relations Committee, the Health and Human Services Committee, the Local Government Committee, and served on a national task force to assist the Department of Justice in developing guidelines for a study on violence against Native American women; and

WHEREAS, Theresa became only the second woman ever elected as president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe in 2008; and

WHEREAS, Theresa's love, leadership, and ability to "get-the-job-done" caused her work to impact many areas in OST Tribal government, state Democratic politics, and beyond. Evidence of Theresa's undeniable influence will remain for years to come. Theresa, in the

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months before her passing, remained committed to inspiring young and old alike to become involved in their community and vote in the 2020 elections. She invested a great deal of her time to help guide the Oglala Nation throughout the Covid-19 pandemic—her final act of selfless commitment to the Oglala Sioux Tribe; and

WHEREAS, Theresa was mother and grandmother to seven children and eleven grandchildren. She was the family matriarch, and always ready to stand up for what was right and to lend a voice to the voiceless—exemplifying the definition of a good relative:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Sixth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that Theresa "Huck" Two Bulls be recognized for a life well-lived, her perseverance and tenacity that shattered glass ceilings, and her many years of dedicated service to all South Dakotans. Theresa stands as a purposeful role model for others to follow.

