

114<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# S. 2032

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## AN ACT

To adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Bison Legacy  
3 Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) bison are considered a historical symbol of  
7 the United States;

8 (2) bison were integrally linked with the eco-  
9 nomic and spiritual lives of many Indian tribes  
10 through trade and sacred ceremonies;

11 (3) there are more than 60 Indian tribes par-  
12 ticipating in the Intertribal Buffalo Council;

13 (4) numerous members of Indian tribes are in-  
14 volved in bison restoration on tribal land;

15 (5) members of Indian tribes have a combined  
16 herd on more than 1,000,000 acres of tribal land;

17 (6) the Intertribal Buffalo Council is a tribal  
18 organization incorporated pursuant to section 17 of  
19 the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the  
20 “Indian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 477);

21 (7) bison can play an important role in improv-  
22 ing the types of grasses found in landscapes to the  
23 benefit of grasslands;

24 (8) a small group of ranchers helped save bison  
25 from extinction in the late 1800s by gathering the  
26 remnants of the decimated herds;

1           (9) bison hold significant economic value for  
2 private producers and rural communities;

3           (10) according to the 2012 Census of Agri-  
4 culture of the Department of Agriculture, as of  
5 2012, 162,110 head of bison were under the stew-  
6 ardsip of private producers, creating jobs and pro-  
7 viding a sustainable and healthy meat source con-  
8 tributing to the food security of the United States;

9           (11) on December 8, 1905, William Hornaday,  
10 Theodore Roosevelt, and others formed the Amer-  
11 ican Bison Society in response to the near extinction  
12 of bison in the United States;

13           (12) on October 11, 1907, the American Bison  
14 Society sent 15 captive-bred bison from the New  
15 York Zoological Park, now known as the “Bronx  
16 Zoo”, to the first wildlife refuge in the United  
17 States, which was known as the “Wichita Mountains  
18 Wildlife Refuge”, resulting in the first successful re-  
19 introduction of a mammal species on the brink of ex-  
20 tinction back into the natural habitat of the species;

21           (13) in 2005, the American Bison Society was  
22 reestablished, bringing together bison ranchers,  
23 managers from Indian tribes, Federal and State  
24 agencies, conservation organizations, and natural  
25 and social scientists from the United States, Can-

1       ada, and Mexico to create a vision for the North  
2       American bison in the 21st century;

3               (14) there are bison herds in National Wildlife  
4       Refuges and National Parks;

5               (15) there are bison in State-managed herds  
6       across 11 States;

7               (16) there is a growing effort to celebrate and  
8       officially recognize the historical, cultural, and eco-  
9       nomic significance of the North American bison to  
10      the heritage of the United States;

11              (17) a bison is portrayed on 2 State flags;

12              (18) the bison has been adopted by 3 States as  
13      the official mammal or animal of those States;

14              (19) a bison has been depicted on the official  
15      seal of the Department of the Interior since 1912;

16              (20) the buffalo nickel played an important role  
17      in modernizing the currency of the United States;

18              (21) several sports teams have the bison as a  
19      mascot, which highlights the iconic significance of  
20      bison in the United States;

21              (22) in the 2nd session of the 113th Congress,  
22      22 Senators led a successful effort to enact a resolu-  
23      tion to designate November 1, 2014, as the second  
24      annual National Bison Day; and

1           (23) members of Indian tribes, bison producers,  
2           conservationists, sportsmen, educators, and other  
3           public and private partners have participated in the  
4           annual National Bison Day celebration at several  
5           events across the United States and are committed  
6           to continuing this tradition annually on the first  
7           Saturday of November.

8 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE NORTH**  
9                   **AMERICAN BISON AS THE NATIONAL MAM-**  
10                   **MAL.**

11           The mammal commonly known as the “North Amer-  
12           ican bison” is adopted as the national mammal of the  
13           United States.

          Passed the Senate December 3, 2015.

          Attest:

*Secretary.*

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