

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4886

To amend the Native American Languages Act to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 10, 2020

Mr. UDALL (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs

A BILL

To amend the Native American Languages Act to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Durbin Feeling Native
5 American Languages Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. ENSURING THE SURVIVAL AND CONTINUING VITAL-**
7 **ITY OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106 of the Native Amer-
9 ican Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2905) is amended by add-
10 ing at the end the following:

1 “(c) EVALUATION; REPORT.—Not later than 1 year
2 after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Presi-
3 dent shall—

4 “(1) require the heads of the various Federal
5 departments, agencies, and instrumentalities to
6 carry out an evaluation described in subsection
7 (a)(1); and

8 “(2) submit to Congress a report that de-
9 scribes—

10 “(A) the results of the evaluations; and

11 “(B) the recommendations of the Secretary
12 of the Interior, the Secretary of Health and
13 Human Services, and the Secretary of Edu-
14 cation, after consultation with Indian tribes,
15 traditional leaders, and representatives of Na-
16 tive American language communities, for
17 amendments to Federal laws that are needed—

18 “(i) to bring the Federal laws into
19 compliance with this Act;

20 “(ii) to improve interagency coordina-
21 tion for purposes of supporting revitaliza-
22 tion, maintenance, and use of Native
23 American languages; and

24 “(iii) to reduce duplication, inefficien-
25 cies, and barriers Native American lan-

1 guage communities face in accessing Fed-
2 eral programs to support efforts to revi-
3 talize, maintain, or increase the use of Na-
4 tive American languages.”.

5 (b) SURVEY ON NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES.—
6 The Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et
7 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

8 **“SEC. 108. SURVEY ON NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES.**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
10 date of enactment of this section, and every 5 years there-
11 after, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting
12 through the Commissioner of the Administration for Na-
13 tive Americans (referred to in this section as the ‘Sec-
14 retary’), shall undertake a survey of the use of Native
15 American languages in the United States.

16 “(b) UPDATES.—Prior to conducting each subse-
17 quent survey after the initial survey under subsection (a),
18 the Secretary shall update the survey in accordance with
19 this section.

20 “(c) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary
21 shall design the initial survey under subsection (a) and
22 each updated survey under subsection (b)—

23 “(1) in consultation with Indian tribes; and

24 “(2) after considering feedback received from
25 Native American language speakers and experts.

1 “(d) CONTENTS.—Each survey under subsection (a)
2 shall solicit—

3 “(1) information on which Native American
4 languages are currently spoken;

5 “(2) estimates of the number of speakers of
6 each Native American language;

7 “(3) any language usage statistics or informa-
8 tion that the Secretary, in consultation with Indian
9 tribes and Native American language speakers and
10 experts, determines to be relevant and appropriate;

11 “(4) information on Native American language
12 maintenance and revitalization projects and prac-
13 tices that are currently being carried out;

14 “(5) information on any unmet Native Amer-
15 ican language resource needs of Indian tribes and
16 Native American language communities; and

17 “(6) any other information that the Secretary,
18 in consultation with Indian tribes and Native Amer-
19 ican language speakers and experts, determines to
20 be necessary.

21 “(e) OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry
23 out outreach and engagement activities to provide
24 Indian tribes, Native language communities, and the
25 public information about—

1 “(A) opportunities to provide input on the
2 development and design of each survey under
3 subsection (a), including information on the
4 consultations required under subsection (c);

5 “(B) the goals and purpose of the surveys
6 conducted under subsection (a); and

7 “(C) the benefits and importance of par-
8 ticipation in surveys under subsection (a).

9 “(2) GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND COOPERATIVE
10 AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may
11 carry out the outreach and engagement activities re-
12 quired under paragraph (1)—

13 “(A) directly; or

14 “(B) through grants to, or contracts or co-
15 operative agreements with—

16 “(i) Indian tribes;

17 “(ii) tribal organizations; and

18 “(iii) nonprofit organizations that
19 work with Indian tribes, Native American
20 language programs, and Native American
21 language communities.

22 “(f) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section requires
23 an Indian tribe, Native American language community, or
24 Native American language speaker—

1 “(1) to participate in a survey under subsection
2 (a); or

3 “(2) to provide specific or culturally sensitive
4 information in completing such a survey.

5 “(g) AVAILABILITY OF SURVEY MATERIALS AND
6 FINDINGS.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days
8 after the date of enactment of this section, and prior
9 to conducting each survey under subsection (a), the
10 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Indian
11 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural
12 Resources of the House of Representatives, and
13 make publicly available, a description of—

14 “(A) the feedback received under sub-
15 section (c) on the design of the survey;

16 “(B) the form and content of the survey;

17 “(C) the plan for deploying the survey to
18 ensure a robust response; and

19 “(D) how the Secretary will ensure any
20 survey enumeration efforts are culturally in-
21 formed and appropriate.

22 “(2) RESULTS.—Not later than 90 days after
23 the date on which each survey under subsection (a)
24 is completed, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-
25 mittee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Com-

1 mittee on Natural Resources of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives, and make publicly available, the results
3 of the survey.

4 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
6 \$1,500,000 for each fiscal year—

7 “(1) preceding a fiscal year during which a sur-
8 vey under subsection (a) is conducted; and

9 “(2) during which a survey under that sub-
10 section is conducted.”.

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