

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING AND
HIGHLIGHTING THE HISTORY, CULTURE, AND
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLES
OF UTAH**

2022 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Elizabeth Weight

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution recognizes the eight tribal nations with an ancestral home in Utah and highlights the benefits of learning about the diverse heritage and culture of each of these nations.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ acknowledges the eight tribal nations that have an ancestral home in Utah;
- ▶ encourages the State Board of Education and all local education agencies to increase opportunities for students to learn about the history and culture of Utah's eight tribal nations; and
- ▶ encourages all schools, teams, and communities in Utah with Native American mascots to create dialogue with local tribal nations and Native American communities.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:



28 WHEREAS, Native Americans are the original inhabitants of the land that became the
29 state of Utah and are a vital part of the state's history, its present, and its future;

30 WHEREAS, Utah is the ancestral home of eight tribal nations, each with a sovereign
31 government and a distinctive heritage and culture:

- 32 ▶ Confederated Tribes of Goshute;
- 33 ▶ Navajo Nation;
- 34 ▶ Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation;
- 35 ▶ Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah;
- 36 ▶ San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe;
- 37 ▶ Skull Valley Band of Goshute;
- 38 ▶ Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation; and
- 39 ▶ Ute Mountain Ute White Mesa Community;

40 WHEREAS, these eight tribal nations represent many thousands of indigenous people
41 who have lived on Utah lands, and currently about 60,000 American Indians and Alaska
42 Natives live in Utah;

43 WHEREAS, "sovereign tribal government" means that each tribe has authority over
44 itself and its territory, and the inherent power to determine its own governance structures to
45 enact legislation, maintain court and law enforcement systems, and determine membership;

46 WHEREAS, tribal members are citizens of three sovereign entities: their tribe, the
47 United States of America, and the state in which they reside;

48 WHEREAS, the National Council of American Indians Youth Commission recently
49 highlighted education areas for improvement:

- 50 ▶ "representations of Native Americans in K-12 education are often harmful,
51 destructive, and stereotypical," with Native Americans commonly appearing in
52 textbooks as "victims, bloodthirsty savages, lazy and unmotivated, and little to
53 no mention of their successes, heroes, or societal contributions";
- 54 ▶ almost 90% of public schools teach no Native American history after 1900, with
55 fewer covering the fight against termination and assimilation, and hardly any
56 teaching about areas of advancement, such as self-determination; and
- 57 ▶ when harmful stereotypes are the only main portrayals of Native Americans,
58 future lawmakers and other students are denied complete, accurate

59 understanding about American Indians, the sovereignty of tribal nations, their co-equal status,
60 and who they are today as modern peoples;

61 WHEREAS, Utah's residents - including students in the state's public education and
62 higher education systems - have the opportunity to engage with the rich history of Native
63 Americans in the state, learn about the eight tribal nations in Utah, and explore how indigenous
64 peoples are currently contributing to society;

65 WHEREAS, Native American names, imagery, symbols, regalia, and characterizations
66 have been used as school or team mascots both in Utah and nationally, often without
67 permission from or an agreement with local Native American communities or tribal nations;

68 WHEREAS, the National Council of American Indians strongly opposes the use of
69 derogatory Native sports mascots but also respects the right of individual tribal nations to work
70 with schools and athletic programs to decide how to protect and celebrate their respective tribal
71 heritage;

72 WHEREAS, schools, teams, and communities in Utah have an opportunity to create
73 meaningful processes to create dialogue about their use of Native American-themed mascots
74 and learn about the effects this practice can have on indigenous residents of the community,
75 particularly the potentially harmful effects on Native American youth; and

76 WHEREAS, learning about the diverse and rich heritage and culture of all people,
77 including Utah's indigenous peoples, would benefit all students and the community, and
78 particularly would have positive benefits for Native American youth, for example:

79 ▶ fostering a learning environment that lifts the academic performance of Native
80 American students;

81 ▶ encouraging higher high school graduation rates for Native American students;
82 and

83 ▶ reducing the suicide rate for Native American youth:

84 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
85 Governor concurring therein, encourages all of Utah's citizens to learn about the rich and
86 diverse history of Native Americans, including the history and cultures of indigenous peoples
87 who live on and have lived on Utah lands, and the meaningful contributions Native Americans
88 are currently making to their communities, to the state, and to the nation.

89 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge the State

90 Board of Education and local education agencies (LEAs) to further engage with Utah Native
91 American leaders to increase opportunities for students in the state's public education system to
92 learn about the eight diverse tribal nations in Utah and the dynamic history, culture, and unique
93 political status of Native Americans, particularly the Native Americans who were first on the
94 land in each LEA's geographic region and who live there now.

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage
96 schools, teams, and communities with Native American mascots -- including names, imagery,
97 symbols, regalia, and characterizations -- to engage in dialogue with local Native American
98 communities and create a process to review and find agreement about the use of or to retire
99 these mascots out of respect for the cultural and spiritual traditions and practices of their Native
100 American neighbors.