
SENATE BILL 6607

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Billig, Holy, McCoy, Zeiger, Salomon, King, Hunt, and Wellman

1 AN ACT Relating to permitting students to wear traditional tribal
2 regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation ceremonies
3 and related events; adding a new section to chapter 28A.600 RCW;
4 adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; and creating new
5 sections.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that
8 relationships between sovereign governments are strengthened when
9 decisions of mutual interest are based in a shared respect of
10 cultural values. The legislature recognizes also that school
11 districts, public schools, and institutions of higher education may
12 use dress codes and other requirements to restrict the wearing of
13 tribal regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation
14 ceremonies.

15 Although the restrictions may be premised on promoting
16 uniformity, they are not appropriate in the context of government-to-
17 government relationships and do not recognize the distinct and unique
18 cultural heritage of Native Americans.

19 The legislature, therefore, intends to affirm inherent rights
20 assured through tribal sovereignty and expressly acknowledge that
21 students in public schools and institutions of higher education may

1 wear traditional tribal regalia or objects of cultural significance
2 at graduation ceremonies and related events.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.600
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) School districts and public schools may not prohibit students
6 from wearing traditional tribal regalia or objects of Native American
7 cultural significance as adornments at graduation ceremonies or
8 related school events.

9 (2) School districts and, when necessary, public schools shall
10 update any relevant policies or procedures in accordance with this
11 section.

12 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
13 apply:

14 (a) "Adornment" means an item attached to or worn with, but not
15 replacing, the cap and gown customarily worn at graduation
16 ceremonies; and

17 (b) "Public schools" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.150.010.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Section 2 of this act applies to the
19 graduating class of 2020 and subsequent graduating classes.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.10
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) Institutions of higher education may not prohibit students
23 from wearing traditional tribal regalia or objects of Native American
24 cultural significance as adornments at graduation ceremonies or
25 related events.

26 (2) Institutions of higher education shall update any relevant
27 policies or procedures in accordance with this section.

28 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
29 apply:

30 (a) "Adornment" means an item attached to or worn with, but not
31 replacing, the cap and gown customarily worn at graduation
32 ceremonies; and

33 (b) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as in
34 RCW 28B.10.016.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act may be known and cited as the
2 right to tribal regalia act.

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