

Public Law 102-188  
102d Congress

Joint Resolution

Dec. 4, 1991  
[S.J. Res. 217]

To authorize and request the President to proclaim 1992 as the "Year of the American Indian".

Whereas American Indians are the original inhabitants of the lands that now constitute the United States of America;

Whereas American Indian governments developed the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and the separation of powers in government, and these principles form the foundation of the United States Government today;

Whereas American Indian societies exhibited a respect for the finite quality of natural resources through deep respect for the Earth, and such values continue to be widely held today;

Whereas American Indian people have served with valor in all wars that the United States has engaged in, from the Revolutionary War to the conflict in the Persian Gulf, often serving in greater numbers, proportionately, than the population of the Nation as a whole;

Whereas American Indians have made distinct and important contributions to the United States and the rest of the world in many fields, including agriculture, medicine, music, language, and art;

Whereas it is fitting that American Indians be recognized for their individual contributions to American society as artists, sculptors, musicians, authors, poets, artisans, scientists, and scholars;

Whereas the five hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Western Hemisphere is an especially appropriate occasion for the people of the United States to reflect on the long history of the original inhabitants of this continent and appreciate that the "discoverees" should have as much recognition as the "discoverer";

Whereas the peoples of the world will be refocusing with special interest on the significant contributions that American Indians have made to society;

Whereas the Congress believes that such recognition of their contributions will promote self-esteem, pride, and self-awareness in American Indians young and old; and

Whereas 1992 represents the first time that American Indians will have been recognized through the commemoration of a year in their honor: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That 1992 is designated as the "Year of the American Indian". The President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon Federal, State, and local governments, interested groups and organizations, and the people of the United States to observe the year with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.*

Approved December 4, 1991.

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**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 217:**

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 137 (1991):

Nov. 1, considered and passed Senate.

Nov. 22, considered and passed House.