

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8729

To establish a Native American language resource center.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 5, 2020

Ms. HAALAND (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GALLEG0, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CASE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. COOK, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To establish a Native American language resource center.

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 “Native American Lan-
5 guage Resource Center Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

7 The purposes of this Act are to create a national re-
8 source center to further the policies set forth in the Native

1 American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.) and,
2 through such national resource center, to—

3 (1) preserve, protect, and promote the rights
4 and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice,
5 and develop Native American languages (as defined
6 in section 103 of the Native American Languages
7 Act (25 U.S.C. 2902));

8 (2) allow the United States to fulfill its trust
9 responsibility to Native American communities and
10 address the effects of past discrimination against
11 Native American language speakers;

12 (3) support revitalization of Native American
13 languages;

14 (4) encourage and support the use of Native
15 American languages as a medium of instruction, in-
16 cluding use as a medium of education in schools op-
17 erated by Tribes, States, the Federal Government,
18 and Native American language educational organiza-
19 tions;

20 (5) encourage and support the use and develop-
21 ment of Native American languages as the medium
22 of instruction for a wide variety of age levels and
23 academic content areas;

24 (6) encourage and support elementary schools,
25 secondary schools, and institutions of higher edu-

1 cation to include Native American languages in the
2 curriculum in the same manner as other world lan-
3 guages, including through cooperative agreements
4 and distance education, and to grant proficiency in
5 Native American languages the same full academic
6 credit as proficiency in other world languages;

7 (7) encourage and support the development of
8 appropriate teacher preparation programming for
9 the teaching of, and through, Native American lan-
10 guages, including appropriate alternative pathways
11 to teacher certification;

12 (8) provide a resource base to provide informa-
13 tion to Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments
14 and Native American educational organizations to
15 allow the spread of best practices in the use, prac-
16 tice, and development of Native American languages
17 in Native American communities, including use in
18 educational institutions;

19 (9) provide a resource base for the use of tech-
20 nology in intensive community-, land-, and archive-
21 based programs, as well as hybrid and collaborative
22 programs in supporting the retention, use, develop-
23 ment, and teaching of Native American languages by
24 government and private entities;

1 (10) provide a developmental base from which
2 interested Tribal colleges and universities and other
3 Native American entities might develop fully func-
4 tioning Native American language medium education
5 systems that include associated preschool, elemen-
6 tary school, secondary school, and adult education
7 programs conducted through the medium of Native
8 American languages;

9 (11) provide a means to further collaboration
10 among formal government, institutional, and com-
11 munity-based Native American language programs,
12 resources, and research efforts with additional access
13 to international best practices in indigenous lan-
14 guage revitalization; and

15 (12) develop a support center system for Native
16 American language participants to gather and share
17 helpful information and experiences.

18 **SEC. 3. NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER.**

19 Section 603 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
20 U.S.C. 1123) is amended—

21 (1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as
22 subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

23 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(b) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE RESOURCE CEN-
2 TER AUTHORIZED.—

3 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized
4 to make a grant to, or enter into a contract with,
5 an eligible entity for the purpose of—

6 “(A) establishing, strengthening, and oper-
7 ating a Native American language resource and
8 training center as described in paragraph (2);
9 and

10 “(B) staffing the center with individuals
11 who have high-level fluency in American Indian,
12 Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian languages
13 and are experienced with Native American lan-
14 guage education in the preschool, elementary
15 school, secondary school, adult education, and
16 higher education programs.

17 “(2) PURPOSES OF CENTER.—The Native
18 American language resource center established under
19 paragraph (1) shall serve as a resource to—

20 “(A) improve the capacity to teach and
21 learn Native American languages and further
22 Native American language acquisition;

23 “(B) preserve, protect, and promote the
24 rights and freedom of Native Americans to use,

1 practice, and develop Native American lan-
2 guages;

3 “(C) allow the United States to fulfill its
4 trust responsibility to Native American commu-
5 nities and address the effects of past discrimi-
6 nation against Native American language
7 speakers;

8 “(D) support revitalization of Native
9 American languages;

10 “(E) encourage and support the use of Na-
11 tive American languages as a medium of in-
12 struction, including use as a medium of edu-
13 cation in schools operated by Tribes, States, the
14 Federal Government, and Native American lan-
15 guage educational organizations;

16 “(F) encourage and support the use and
17 development of Native American languages as
18 the medium of instruction for a wide variety of
19 age levels and academic content areas;

20 “(G) encourage and support elementary
21 schools, secondary schools, and institutions of
22 higher education to include Native American
23 languages in the curriculum in the same man-
24 ner as other world languages, including through
25 cooperative agreements and distance education,

1 and to grant proficiency in Native American
2 languages the same full academic credit as pro-
3 ficiency in other world languages;

4 “(H) encourage and support the develop-
5 ment of appropriate teacher preparation pro-
6 gramming for the teaching of, and through, Na-
7 tive American languages, including appropriate
8 alternative pathways to teacher certification;

9 “(I) provide a resource base to provide in-
10 formation to Federal, Tribal, State, and local
11 governments and Native American educational
12 organizations to allow the spread of best prac-
13 tices in the use, practice, and development of
14 Native American languages in Native American
15 communities, including use in educational insti-
16 tutions;

17 “(J) provide a resource base for the use of
18 technology in intensive community-, land-, and
19 archive-based programs, as well as hybrid and
20 collaborative programs in supporting the reten-
21 tion, use, development, and teaching of Native
22 American languages by government and private
23 entities;

24 “(K) support the acquisition of distance
25 learning technologies and training for parents,

1 students, teachers, and learning support staff,
2 including the compilation and curation of dig-
3 ital libraries and other online resources in tar-
4 get Native American languages, the develop-
5 ment of distance learning curricula appropriate
6 for preschool, elementary school, secondary
7 school, adult education, and postsecondary edu-
8 cation, the pedagogical training for teachers,
9 and other efforts necessary to continue Native
10 American language acquisition among American
11 Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian
12 communities through distance learning;

13 “(L) provide a developmental base from
14 which interested Tribal colleges and universities
15 and other Native American entities might de-
16 velop fully functioning Native American lan-
17 guage medium education systems that include
18 associated preschool, elementary school, sec-
19 ondary school, and adult education programs
20 conducted through the medium of Native Amer-
21 ican languages;

22 “(M) provide a means to further collabora-
23 tion among formal government, institutional,
24 and community-based Native American lan-
25 guage programs, resources, and research efforts

1 with additional access to international best
2 practices in indigenous language revitalization;

3 “(N) develop a support center system for
4 Native American language participants to gath-
5 er and share helpful information and experi-
6 ences; and

7 “(O) address any of the purposes of for-
8 eign language centers included under this sec-
9 tion if, in doing so, the Native American lan-
10 guage resource and training center—

11 “(i) does so as a subsidiary activity;

12 “(ii) focuses benefits on Native Amer-
13 icans living in Native American commu-
14 nities, or closely tied to such communities;
15 and

16 “(iii) ensures that one of the out-
17 comes being strengthened through this
18 subparagraph is the use of one or more
19 Native American languages in a Native
20 American community.

21 “(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

22 “(A) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligi-
23 ble entity’ means—

24 “(i) an institution of higher education;

1 “(ii) a consortium of such institutions;

2 or

3 “(iii) a consortium of such institutions

4 and other entities with unique responsibil-

5 ities for Native American languages.

6 “(B) NATIVE AMERICAN; NATIVE AMER-

7 ICAN LANGUAGE.—The terms ‘Native Amer-

8 ican’ and ‘Native American language’ have the

9 meanings given those terms in section 103 of

10 the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C.

11 2902).”; and

12 (3) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) of

13 subsection (c), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by

14 striking “subsection (a)” and inserting “this sec-

15 tion”.

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