

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 499 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY CUTLER, V. BROWN, BAKER, B. BOYLE, BRADFORD, BROOKS, R. BROWN, CLYMER, CREIGHTON, DIGIROLAMO, EVERETT, FLECK, FREEMAN, GABLER, GEORGE, GODSHALL, HESS, HICKERNELL, MAJOR, MILLARD, MIRABITO, MOUL, MULLERY, MURT, OBERLANDER, O'NEILL, PASHINSKI, PAYTON, PICKETT, PYLE, QUINN, RAPP, REICHLEY, ROCK, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, SONNEY, SWANGER, VEREB, WATSON AND YOUNGBLOOD, NOVEMBER 9, 2011

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
NOVEMBER 9, 2011

A RESOLUTION

Congratulating and recognizing Pennsylvania's American Indian peoples and communities.

WHEREAS, The indigenous peoples of North America, the first Americans, have woven rich and diverse threads into the tapestry of the heritage and history of the United States and this Commonwealth. Throughout their history in this great land, they have faced moments of triumph and tragedy alike; and

WHEREAS, American Indians have inhabited the land which is now known as Pennsylvania dating back some 5,000 years; and

WHEREAS, Former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Dr. George P. Donehoo, acknowledged that "No state in the entire nation is richer in Indian names or in fact Indian history than Pennsylvania"; and

WHEREAS, Some of the many great nations that inhabited the territory known as Pennsylvania were and are the Lenape,

Cherokee, Susquehanna, Unami, Minsi, Minquas, Erie, Muscogee, Mohawk, Huron, Allegany, Shawnee, Susquehannock, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca Indians and the Wyandot, Chippewa, Mississauga, and Ottawa Indians as well as many others who sustained themselves in the natural environment of the Keystone State; and

WHEREAS, Precolonial Indian villages and ancient burial mounds which were plentiful and spread en masse across the territory now known as Pennsylvania were destroyed or lost due to agricultural development and industrialization; and

WHEREAS, McKees Rocks Mound in McKeesport is one of those ancient burial mounds in this Commonwealth that stands as a testament to the highly civilized societies of indigenous American peoples and is reported as one of the oldest places of human habitation in eastern North America; and

WHEREAS, Many of Pennsylvania's busiest highways such as Route 1, Route 40, Route 30, Route 611 and Route 590 started as American Indian paths that were used for trade and hunting; and

WHEREAS, American Indian culture and society have contributed to the agricultural development, medicinal discoveries, environmental preservation, commerce, governmental institutions and structure and many other facets of our country, State and cities; and

WHEREAS, Many American Indian peoples live in our urban cities, including 4,000 in Philadelphia and more than 26,843 in Pennsylvania according to the 2010 Census; and

WHEREAS, Many of the American Indians living in our counties, cities, towns and boroughs have gone through great adversities to maintain their cultural and ethnic identities; and

WHEREAS, Many southern and northern American Indians in the

early 1800s through the 1900s were mislabeled "colored," "Negro," "mulatto" and "white," resulting in the dilution of their identities; and

WHEREAS, Many have persevered through trauma and tragedy to preserve culture and traditions to be beacons of light for future generations; and

WHEREAS, American Indian culture and American Indians, indigenous peoples, are to be respected and honored; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth acknowledges the importance of educating the citizens of this Commonwealth about the heritage, history, art, archeology and traditions of the American Indian peoples and communities in the State of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, American Indians continue to contribute to the culture of this Commonwealth through the ancestral preservation of their heritage; and

WHEREAS, Their dedicated efforts to honor their proud heritage assist in developing a deeper understanding within this Commonwealth of the vibrant and ancient customs of the indigenous peoples living in this Commonwealth today; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives congratulate and recognize the many contributions of American Indians, recognize the strong and living traditions of the first peoples to call our land home and look forward to working with American Indians in the future and appreciate their future contributions to our Commonwealth.