



North Dakota House of Representatives

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COMMITTEES:

Industry, Business and Labor
Transportation

Chairman Barta, and members of the Senate Industry, Business, and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to present this important bill before you today. As the sponsor of HB 1545, I stand before you to advocate for a change that will honor and recognize the rich history, culture, and contributions of Indigenous people in North Dakota and throughout the United States.

This bill seeks to amend Section 1-03-13 of the North Dakota Century Code to change the name of "First Nations Day" to "Indigenous people Day." This name change reflects a broader, more inclusive acknowledgment of the diverse Indigenous nations that have historically inhabited this land and continue to shape our communities in meaningful ways.

For generations, the Indigenous people of North Dakota have contributed to the development, culture, and strength of our state. Whether through the resilience of our Native communities, the preservation of traditions, Indigenous people play an integral role in our state's identity and future.

However, our current observance—First Nations Day—while important, does not fully capture the diversity of the Indigenous populations across North America. Changing the name to Indigenous people Day is not simply a matter of semantics. It is a statement of respect, acknowledgment, and unity. This change recognizes that all Indigenous communities—whether they be Dakota, Lakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara or from any other tribe or nation—have made unique and shared contributions to the fabric of our society.

This bill is a step toward greater understanding, and healing for all North Dakotans. It aligns our state with national efforts to officially recognize Indigenous people Day across the United States, a celebration of cultural heritage and the ongoing work to overcome centuries of difficulty and hardships.

I ask the committee to give a do pass recommendation for House Bill 1545, and I look forward to working with all of you to continue building a state that honors and elevates the voices of Indigenous people.

Thank you.