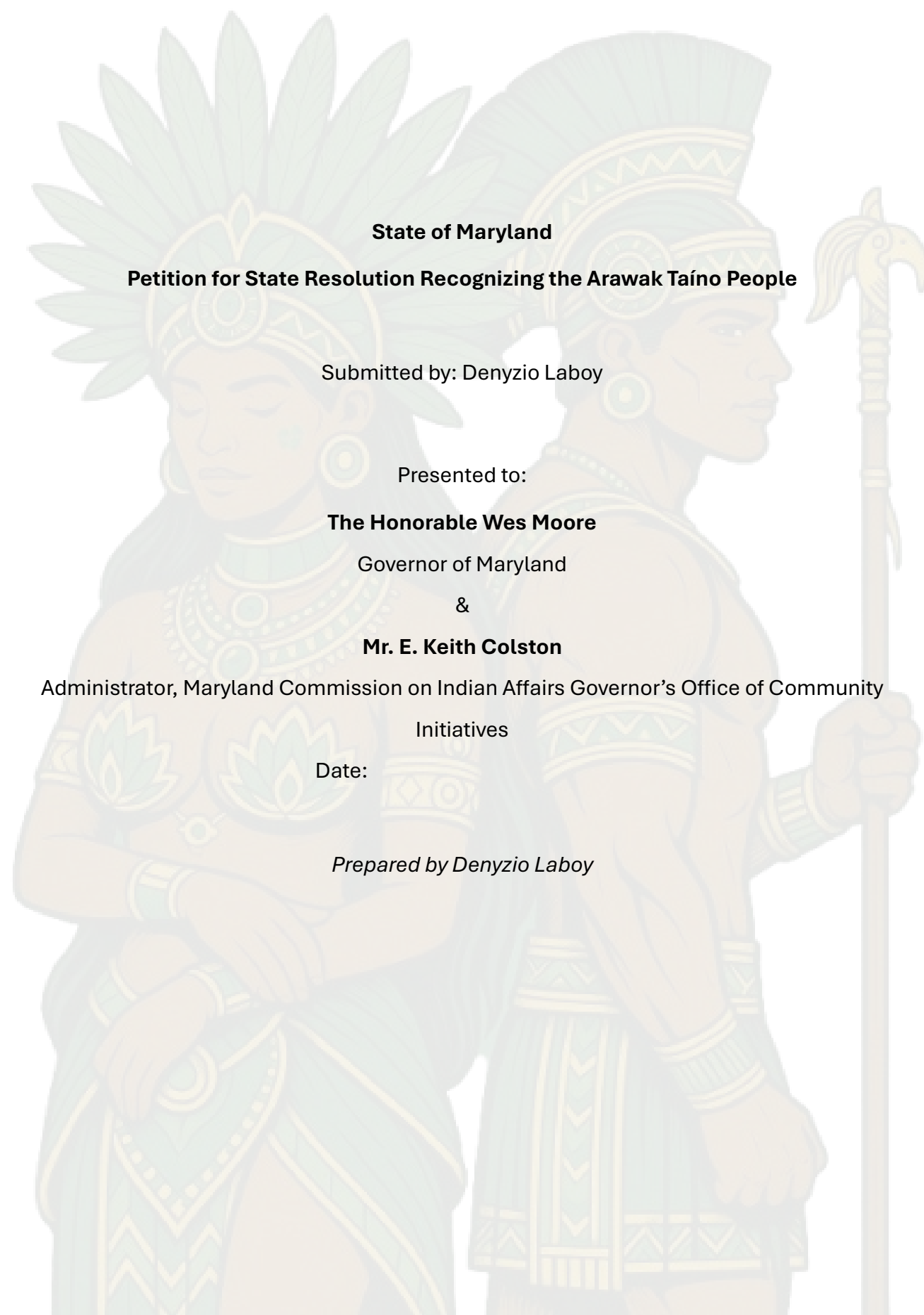




State of Maryland

Petition for State Resolution Recognizing the Arawak Taíno People

Submitted by: Denyzio Laboy

Presented to:

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

&

Mr. E. Keith Colston

Administrator, Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs Governor's Office of Community
Initiatives

Date:

Prepared by Denyzio Laboy

About the Petitioner

Denyzio Laboy is a Maryland resident and community advocate dedicated to promoting education, cultural awareness, and the preservation of Indigenous Caribbean heritage. His work focuses on honoring the legacy of the Arawak Taíno people—the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean whose history and descendants extend throughout the United States, including the State of Maryland. This petition seeks to respectfully encourage the State of Maryland to consider a formal acknowledgment of the Arawak Taíno as a living Indigenous population through an official state resolution.

Proposed Maryland State Resolution

A Joint Resolution concerning

Recognition of the Arawak Taíno People and Establishment of a Voluntary Heritage Registry

Purpose: To promote cultural education, awareness, and inclusion related to the Arawak Taíno Indigenous people and descendants residing in Maryland; to designate the fourth Saturday in April as annual “Arawak Taíno Heritage Day”; and to consider establishing a voluntary heritage registry for educational and cultural purposes.

WHEREAS, the Arawak Taíno are Indigenous to the Caribbean islands of Borikén (Puerto Rico), Kiskeya/Haiti (Dominican Republic and Haiti), The Bahamas, and Cuba, and today, their descendants live throughout the United States, including Maryland.

WHEREAS, Taíno descendants contribute to Maryland’s cultural, educational, civic, and economic life and seek acknowledgment consistent with similar recognitions made in Connecticut, Massachusetts, California, New York, Colorado, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

WHEREAS, community-led registries such as the United Confederation of Taíno People’s (UCTP) Taíno Population Census and Intertribal Registry provide models for voluntary, culturally based identification and engagement.

WHEREAS, the enduring presence of the Arawak Taíno people is reflected through the preservation of language, culture, art, and spiritual practice among descendants across the Americas.

WHEREAS, the Higuayagua Taíno Luku Kairi Tribal Nation continues to lead educational, cultural, and linguistic revitalization initiatives, including the teaching of Arawak Taíno language, traditional spirituality, and intertribal cooperation.

WHEREAS, individuals and organizations across the United States, including advocates like Denyzio Laboy and community-led groups such as the Taino American Indigenous National Organization (T.A.I.N.O.), are working to preserve and promote Arawak Taíno identity, heritage, and educational awareness through cultural programming, public outreach, and research.

WHEREAS, the State of Maryland has demonstrated ongoing commitment to diversity, education, and cultural inclusion; now, therefore —

BE IT RESOLVED that the State of Maryland hereby recognizes the Arawak Taíno as a living Indigenous people whose descendants reside within the state.

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly consider designating the fourth Saturday of April as Arawak Taíno Heritage Day to promote cultural understanding and educational programming.

BE IT RESOLVED that partnerships among state agencies, schools, and community organizations be encouraged to promote public education on Arawak Taíno history and culture.

BE IT RESOLVED that any consideration of a voluntary Arawak Taíno Heritage Registry shall remain strictly informational, fully compliant with privacy laws, and serve only to promote awareness and cultural exchange.

BE IT RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Maryland, the Maryland State Department of Education, and the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs for consideration.

Closing Statement

This petition is submitted as an individual effort to promote cultural awareness, unity, and recognition of Maryland's Indigenous Caribbean heritage. It represents a call for education, understanding, and celebration of the Arawak Taíno people — one of the first Indigenous civilizations of the Americas. The Arawak Taíno culture continues to thrive today through the work of dedicated advocates and cultural groups. The Higuayagua Taíno Luku Kairi Tribal Nation advances traditional teachings, language revival, and community education, ensuring cultural survival and continuity. The United Confederation of Taino People, an international organization dedicated to the preservation, recognition, and empowerment of Taíno and other Arawak-descendant Indigenous peoples through advocacy, education, and cultural revitalization. The Taino American Indigenous National Organization, who also advocate for cultural survival, community, and educational initiatives. Similarly, community-led advocacy and educational initiatives, such as those led by Denyzio Laboy

and other heritage preservationists, serve as vital contributions to the shared mission of sustaining Arawak Taíno identity and visibility within the broader American and Caribbean cultural landscape.

Respectfully requested,

Denyzio Laboy

Denyzio Laboy
Resident and Citizen Advocate
Boys, Maryland
Laboywonder716@gmail.com
Website: www.tainonatives.org

Appendix B

Letters of Support – Maryland Joint Resolution Recognizing the Arawak Taíno People

*Compiled for presentation to the Office of the Governor of Maryland and
the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs*

Statement of Support

[NAME AND TITLE]

[CITY OR COUNTY YOU REPRESENT]

I, **[Type Name Here]**, acknowledge and support the initiative led by Denyzio Laboy of T.A.I.N.O. — Taino American Indigenous National Organization to present a petition to Governor Wes Moore and the Maryland General Assembly for a state resolution recognizing the living Arawak Taíno Indigenous people and establishing the fourth Saturday in April as “Arawak Taíno Heritage Day.”

The Arawak Taíno people were among the first Indigenous communities encountered by Europeans in the Americas, and their cultural, linguistic, and historical legacy endures in our language and communities today. Recognizing this heritage is consistent with Maryland’s values of inclusion, justice, and cultural preservation.

I hereby lend my support to this important and overdue recognition and encourage our state and local leaders to join in solidarity with this effort.

Signed,

[SIGN NAME HERE]

[PRINT NAME HERE]

Date: _____

Appendix C

Maryland- Arawak Indigenous Descendants Ethnic demographics Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban, Jamaican, Haitian, and Bahamian Ancestry

This appendix provides an overview of Maryland’s population by county for individuals identifying with Puerto Rican, Dominican, Jamaican, Haitian, and Bahamian ancestry based on the most recent American Community Survey (ACS) data published by the U.S. Census Bureau. These data help illustrate the demographic presence and distribution of Caribbean-origin communities across the state of Maryland, demonstrating the shared ancestral, cultural, and linguistic ties of Arawak-descended peoples throughout the region. It is important to note that while Puerto Rican, Dominican, Haitian, Jamaican, and Bahamian communities each represent distinct national identities, extensive anthropological, historical, and linguistic scholarship affirms that these populations share common ancestral and cultural origins rooted in the Indigenous Arawak Taíno peoples of the Caribbean. Given centuries of regional migration, intermarriage, and cultural preservation, it is both historically consistent and academically reasonable to conclude that a substantial majority—estimated at more than ninety to ninety-five percent—of individuals within these demographic groups retain ancestral connections to Arawak Taíno lineage. This understanding provides essential interpretive context for the demographic data presented herein and underscores that the presence of these populations within Maryland represents not only cultural diversity but the continued legacy and living heritage of the Arawak Taíno people.

County	Puerto Rican	Dominican	Jamaican	Haitian	Bahamian
Montgomery County	23,451	2,121	18,554	7,210	512
Prince George’s County	31,743	3,004	42,672	13,421	865
Baltimore City	11,120	1,002	22,348	8,874	376
Anne Arundel County	8,329	721	6,102	2,113	190
Howard County	7,511	652	9,225	3,010	207
Frederick County	4,313	419	1,902	664	75
Charles County	5,212	498	4,786	1,888	121
Baltimore County	15,987	1,438	12,880	5,312	284
Harford County	3,925	311	2,554	1,019	82
Wicomico County	2,119	214	1,111	564	51

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2019–2023 5-Year Estimates)

Appendix D

Record and Sample of States who have already affirmed a similar Action Specifically
aligned with the Arawak Taino Indigenous People



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

House Resolution No. 10

LCO No. 6190



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF
TAÍNO DESCENDANTS IN THIS STATE.**

Resolved by this House:

1 WHEREAS, the residents of this state of Taíno heritage merit
2 recognition; and

3 WHEREAS, such residents serve a vital role in the state's diverse
4 cultural fabric; and

5 WHEREAS, the Taíno people contributed both historically and
6 culturally to this state, ensuring that their heritage is recognized and
7 preserved for future generations; and

8 WHEREAS, this House supports efforts of the Taíno people to gain
9 federal recognition while clarifying that this recognition does not confer
10 tribal status, nor establish claims to land or sovereignty within the state;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, encouraging collaboration with Taíno cultural
13 organizations will promote awareness, support educational initiatives

14 and assist in language revitalization efforts.

15 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this House respects and
16 affirms the cultural identity of Taíno descendants in Connecticut,
17 ensuring that their heritage is recognized and preserved for future
18 generations while fostering a greater understanding of their historical
19 and ongoing contributions to the state.

GAE *House Favorable*



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

House Resolution No. 10

LCO No. 8190



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAD)

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF
TAINO DESCENDANTS IN THIS STATE.**

Resolved by this House:

- 1 WHEREAS, the residents of this state of Taino heritage merit
- 2 recognition; and
- 3 WHEREAS, such residents serve a vital role in the state's diverse
- 4 cultural fabric; and
- 5 WHEREAS, the Taino people contributed both historically and
- 6 culturally to this state, ensuring that their heritage is recognized and
- 7 preserved for future generations; and
- 8 WHEREAS, this House supports efforts of the Taino people to gain
- 9 federal recognition while clarifying that this recognition does not confer
- 10 tribal status, nor establish claims to land or sovereignty within the state;
- 11 and
- 12 WHEREAS, encouraging collaboration with Taino cultural
- 13 organizations will promote awareness, support educational initiatives
- 14 and assist in language revitalization efforts.

LCO No. 8190

1 of 2

House Resolution No. 10

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- 16 affirms the cultural identity of Taino descendants in Connecticut,
- 17 ensuring that their heritage is recognized and preserved for future
- 18 generations while fostering a greater understanding of their historical
- 19 and ongoing contributions to the state.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]

Co-Sponsors: REP. BOSARIC, 128th Dist.; REP. REYES, 75th Dist.
REP. BUMGARDNER, 41st Dist.; REP. SANCHEZ J., 6th Dist.

PROCLAMATION TO SUPPORT THE RECOGNITION OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ARLINGTON
(introduced on January 25, 2021)

VOTED: THAT THE TOWN ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the Indigenous Peoples of the lands that would later become known as the Americas and specifically the Massachusett tribe in the lands which would later become known as Menotomy (from an Algonquian word), have occupied these lands since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS the Town of Arlington, Massachusetts (the “Town”) wishes to honor our nation and town's Indigenous roots, history and contributions; and

WHEREAS the cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas are worthy of being promoted, their history is rich, diverse, and worthy of celebration; and

WHEREAS the actions and policies of European colonizers of the Americas actively destroyed and suppressed parts of those cultures, and racism has served to perpetuate high rates of poverty for Indigenous Peoples and led to inequities in health, education, and housing, as illustrated most recently with the severe impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS the Town has a history of opposing racism, and prominent residents throughout history such as Cyrus Dallin were particularly active in advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples; and

WHEREAS Indigenous Peoples Day was first proposed in Geneva in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas; and

WHEREAS in 1990, representatives from 120 Indigenous nations at the First Continental Conference on 500 Years of Indian Resistance unanimously passed a resolution to transform Columbus Day into an occasion to strengthen the process of continental unity and struggle towards liberation, and thereby use the occasion to reveal a more accurate historical record; and

WHEREAS the District of Columbia, States of Alaska, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, Wisconsin, and localities including Somerville MA, Cambridge MA, Brookline MA, Newton MA, Marblehead MA, Northampton MA, Amherst MA, Portland ME, Los Angeles CA, San Francisco CA, Denver CO, Portland OR, Seattle WA, Columbus OH and many more have adopted Indigenous Peoples Day as a counter-celebration, in lieu of Columbus Day, to promote Indigenous cultures and commemorate the history of Indigenous Peoples; and

WHEREAS Columbus Day commemorates the landing of Christopher Columbus in the Americas specifically on the Caribbean islands of The Bahamas on October 12, 1492 and, later, on Hispaniola (present-day countries of the Dominican Republic and Haiti); and voyages of Columbus to the Americas initiated the transatlantic slave trade and the era of conquest, and his

governorship of the Caribbean instituted systematic policies of slavery and extermination of Indigenous populations, especially the Taino/Arawak people whose population was reduced from approximately 8 million to 100,000, being further reduced by the continuation of his policies until near-extinction in 1542.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Select Board votes to proclaim that the second Monday of October shall be commemorated as Indigenous Peoples Day in Arlington, superseding local references to Columbus Day and in recognition of the position of Indigenous Peoples as native to these lands, and the suffering they faced during and since the European conquest; and be it further

RESOLVED that the people of Arlington, as well as local businesses, organizations, and public institutions are encouraged to observe Indigenous Peoples Day by reflecting upon the dispossession of the homelands and villages of the Massachusett people of this region who lived here for millennia prior to the arrival of European settlers, and upon the history of the other Indigenous Peoples who have lived in Arlington, and by celebrating the survival of Indigenous Peoples and recognizing their struggle to perpetuate and celebrate their ancestral heritage and practices, as well as celebrating the thriving cultures and values that Indigenous Peoples have brought and continue to bring to our Town and the wider community; and be it further

RESOLVED that in any observances, Arlington shall endeavor to include Indigenous representation from amongst its residents and from the Massachusett tribe and will also seek representation from Indigenous organizations in the area such as the North American Indian Center of Boston, United American Indians of New England, Cultural Survival, and IndigenousPeoplesDayMA.org as well as other Arlington community representation from segments of the community; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Arlington Public Schools are encouraged to join in this observance with appropriate exercises and/or instruction in all schools around the time of Indigenous Peoples Day, to the end that the culture, history and diversity of Indigenous Peoples be celebrated and perpetuated; and be it further

RESOLVED that local businesses, organizations, and public institutions are encouraged to evaluate their imagery and insignia, to ensure that representations of Indigenous Peoples are not misappropriated, with a preference for using the Town Seal in official capacities; and be it further

RESOLVED that all Town entities are encouraged to celebrate and recognize the heritage of the peoples indigenous to Massachusetts and Arlington by including the following land acknowledgement at the beginning of all of the Town's public meetings:

“We acknowledge that the Town of Arlington is located on the ancestral lands of the Massachusett Tribe, the tribe of Indigenous peoples from whom the Colony, Province, and Commonwealth have taken their names. We pay our respects to the ancestral bloodline of the Massachusett Tribe and their descendants who still inhabit historic Massachusett territories today.”

; and be it further

RESOLVED that it is requested that the Town Clerk ensure that the Massachusetts Commission of Indian Affairs, North American Indian Center of Boston, IndigenousPeoplesDayMA.org, United American Indians of New England, Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, the Massachusett Tribe at Ponkapoag, Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Tribal Council, the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council (including the Hassanamisco and Natick), the Assonet Band of Wampanoags, the Chappaquiddick Wampanoags, the Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuc, the Pocasset Wampanoag, the Herring Pond Wampanoag, and the Seaconke Wampanoag, all of which include descendants of those people indigenous to Massachusetts, as well as the Arlington School Committee, Arlington Advocate, and YourArlington.com receive electronic or paper copies of this Resolution.

An Act

HOUSE BILL 20-1031

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Benavidez and Mullica, Buckner, Caraveo, Coleman, Cutter, Duran, Exum, Garnett, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Herod, Hooton, Jackson, Jaquez Lewis, Kipp, Melton, Michaelson Jenet, Singer, Snyder, Tipper, Weissman, Woodrow;
also SENATOR(S) Williams A. and Hansen, Fenberg, Fields, Foote, Gonzales.

CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW STATE HOLIDAY IN PLACE OF
COLUMBUS DAY.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

(a) State holidays are intended to honor prominent figures in United States history and acknowledge other civic events and celebrations in Colorado.

(b) Although Christopher Columbus is recognized as a voyager who arrived in what is now known as the Caribbean Sea, he never traveled to or entered the territory that became the United States. He had no knowledge

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

of or contact with the area now known as the state of Colorado, providing no rationale for a Colorado state holiday in his name. In 1492, he was welcomed by the indigenous Taino people to their homeland on the island of Quiqueya, which Columbus renamed Hispaniola. Fifty years later, the Taino people had been nearly exterminated by Columbus and his successors.

(c) Frances Xavier Cabrini was a humanitarian champion of immigrants and children in the United States. Cabrini first came to Colorado in 1902. In 1905, she opened the Queen of Heaven Orphanage for girls in a residence in north Denver.

(d) In her lifetime, Cabrini was responsible for founding sixty-seven institutions, including schools, hospitals, and orphanages throughout the United States and in South and Central America.

(e) In 1909, Cabrini negotiated the purchase of a rural property to serve as a summer camp for the girls living in the orphanage. The land was on the eastern slope of Lookout Mountain in Golden and had no reliable source of water.

(f) During Cabrini's last visit to Colorado in 1912, while staying at the mountain camp, she directed the girls to dig under a specific rock where they found a spring of fresh water. That spring continues to provide water to the property today.

(g) The land upon which Cabrini established her orphanage and camp is the traditional territory and homeland of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Ute indigenous nations. Those indigenous peoples, and all indigenous peoples, have a special, sacred relationship with water, similar to that of Cabrini.

(h) Cabrini was naturalized as a United States citizen in October 1909. Recognizing the first Monday in October as Frances Xavier Cabrini Day in recognition of Cabrini's contributions to the state of Colorado creates an opportunity to promote an appreciation, tolerance, and understanding of the different cultures that make up our state.

(2) Therefore, in order to preserve the number of state holidays while commemorating the contributions of Cabrini to Colorado and the

United States, the general assembly hereby replaces Columbus day with Frances Xavier Cabrini day as a legal state holiday.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-11-101, **amend** (1) as follows:

24-11-101. Legal holidays - effect. (1) The following days, viz: The first day of January, commonly called New Year's day; the third Monday in January, which shall be observed as the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; the third Monday in February, commonly called Washington-Lincoln day; the last Monday in May, commonly called Memorial day; the fourth day of July, commonly called Independence day; the first Monday in September, commonly called Labor day; the ~~second~~ **FIRST** Monday in October, commonly called ~~Columbus~~ **FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI** day; the eleventh day of November, commonly called Veterans' day; the fourth Thursday in November, commonly called Thanksgiving day; the twenty-fifth day of December, commonly called Christmas day; and any day appointed or recommended by the governor of this state or the president of the United States as a day of fasting or prayer or thanksgiving, are hereby declared to be legal holidays and shall, for all purposes whatsoever, as regards the presenting for payment or acceptance and the protesting and giving notice of the dishonor of bills of exchange, drafts, bank checks, promissory notes, or other negotiable instruments and also for the holding of courts, be treated and considered as is the first day of the week commonly called Sunday.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 5-1-301, **amend** (6) as follows:

5-1-301. General definitions. In addition to definitions appearing in subsequent articles, as used in this code, unless the context otherwise requires:

(6) "Business day" means any calendar day except Sunday, New Year's day, the third Monday in January observed as the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington-Lincoln day, Memorial day, Independence day, Labor day, ~~Columbus~~ **FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI** day, Veterans' day, Thanksgiving day, and Christmas day.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 6-1-102, **amend** (2.5)

as follows:

6-1-102. Definitions. As used in this article 1, unless the context otherwise requires:

(2.5) "Business day" means any calendar day except Sunday, New Year's day, the third Monday in January observed as the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington-Lincoln day, Memorial day, Independence day, Labor day, ~~Columbus~~ FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI day, Veterans' day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

SECTION 5. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 5, 2020, if adjournment sine die is on May 6, 2020); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2020

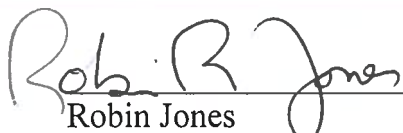
and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.



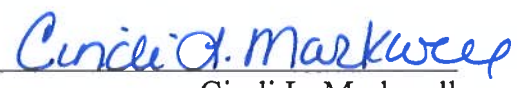
KC Becker
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES



Leroy M. Garcia
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

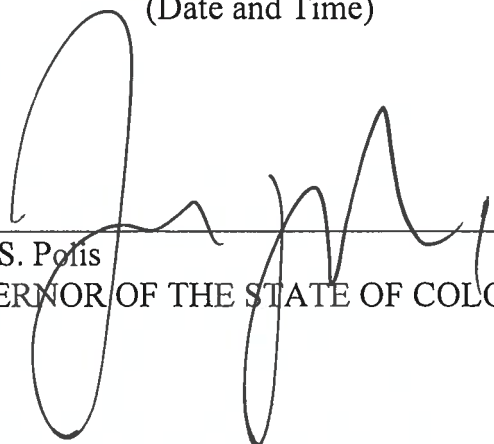


Robin Jones
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES



Cindi L. Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE

APPROVED March 20, 2020 at 12:49 pm
(Date and Time)



Jared S. Polis
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

Aurora, Colorado



Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Taino were the Indigenous people of the Caribbean, and the first to encounter Christopher Columbus upon his arrival in 1492, ending immense suffering, displacement, and near-eradication as a result of colonization; and,

WHEREAS, the Taino are recognized as the Indigenous ancestors of the Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Cuban peoples, whose cultural, linguistic, and spiritual legacies continue to thrive through the Caribbean and its diaspora; and,

WHEREAS, the Taino people made lasting contributions to agriculture, language, and world culture, introducing words, foods, and traditions that remain vital across generations; and,

WHEREAS, despite centuries of attempted erasure, the Taino people and their descendants have shown resilience through cultural revitalization and a renewed commitment to preserving their heritage; and,

WHEREAS, the Taino Nation of Colorado, founded and headquartered in the city of Aurora, was established to educate, unite, and raise awareness of Taino history, heritage, and identity among all Coloradans, while serving one of the largest Puerto Rican and Caribbean communities in the state; and,

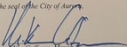
WHEREAS, the city of Aurora recognizes the importance of honoring the Taino people and ensuring their story, strength, and enduring spirit continue to inspire future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mike Coffman, Mayor of the City of Aurora, Colorado, do hereby proclaim the week of October 20 through October 26 as:

Taino Remembrance Week

in the city of Aurora and encourage all residents to learn about and honor the history, culture, and continued presence of the Taino people, and to recognize the important work of the Taino Nation of Colorado in preserving and promoting this vital part of our shared human heritage.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Aurora, Colorado, to be affixed this 20th day of October 2023.



Mike Coffman, Mayor
Aurora, Colorado

BY THE OFFICE OF THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR

A PROCLAMATION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

OCTOBER 13, 2025

California again proclaims this day as Indigenous Peoples' Day, the seventh formal celebration of the strength of culture and the memory of land that endure for all Indigenous people who now call California home, from those who originate from and maintain deep relationships with these lands and waters, to those who have carried the gifts of their languages, cultures, foods, and families across oceans, borders, and generations.

This Indigenous Peoples' Day, we celebrate those people and acts that exemplify the grit, adaptability, and generosity of spirit that are the most American of values.

We celebrate the Taino people, past, present, and their descendants — the citizens of the United States Virgin Islands and Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico who first encountered ships from the east and whose survivance shines as an example of Indigenous peoples' enduring determination to thrive in the lands and waters of their ancestors.

We celebrate the acts of bravery, kindness, and solidarity of Indigenous peoples that arise from a legacy of survivance and adaptation to meet the challenges of an increasingly challenging world. The generous gift of the Choctaw to those suffering in hÉireann through An Gorta Mór; the Native American, First Nations, and Māori soldiers who fought for the rights and liberation of Italians during World War II; this year's historic designation as the Año de la Mujer Indígena by the Estados Unidos Mexicanos and the focus on Indigenous peoples as guardians of biodiversity promised at this year's Convening of Parties in Amazônia — these acts underscore our common humanity, values, and acknowledgment of the deep connections we all maintain with people and places that make us who we are.

Today, Indigenous people from across the state welcomed the sunrise in the Ohlone homelands of Alcatraz, a national park cared for by Californians in the vacuum of a federal shutdown. Next year, in celebration of the *very American* sport of football, Ohlone homelands will host the *very American* icon, Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio — who proudly embodies the survivance, resilience, and excellence of the people of the Puerto Rico despite waves of colonial violence.

On this Indigenous Peoples' Day, we resoundingly cheer the indomitable fortitude, cultural vibrance, and adaptability of Indigenous peoples from across the globe who call this place home, even as their souls resonate with lands and waters of their ancestral homelands.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim October 13, 2025 as "Indigenous Peoples' Day."



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

RESOLUTIONS COMMENDING THE TAÍNO PEOPLE ON
ITS RECOGNITION OF OCTOBER 13, 2025 AS
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.

WHEREAS, THE TAINO PEOPLE WILL RECOGNIZE
OCTOBER 13, 2025 AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY IN
THE COMMONWEALTH; AND

WHEREAS, THE TAÍNO ARE THE INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES OF BORIKÉN, KISKEYA AND OTHER
CARIBBEAN ISLANDS, WITH A RICH CULTURAL
HERITAGE, LANGUAGE AND WAY OF LIFE; AND

WHEREAS, TAÍNO DESCENDANTS HAVE SURVIVED
THROUGH CULTURAL CONTINUITY, ORAL HISTORY
AND ANCESTRAL PRACTICE; AND

WHEREAS, TAÍNO-IDENTIFYING RESIDENTS IN
THE COMMONWEALTH ARE PART OF THE TAÍNO
DIASPORA, ESPECIALLY WITHIN THE PUERTO RICAN
AND DOMINICAN COMMUNITIES, AND ACTIVELY
ENGAGE IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION,
CEREMONIAL PRACTICES, TRIBAL AFFILIATION AND
EDUCATIONAL WORK; AND

WHEREAS, MANY PRESENT-DAY TAÍNO TRIBAL
COMMUNITIES ACTIVELY WORK TO PRESERVE,
REVITALIZE AND PROMOTE THE ANCESTRAL
KNOWLEDGE, LANGUAGE AND TRADITIONS OF THE
TAÍNO NATION THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, THAT THE MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
HEREBY COMMENDS THE TAÍNO PEOPLE ON ITS
RECOGNITION OF OCTOBER 13, 2025 AS INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES' DAY; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, THAT A COPY OF THESE RESOLUTIONS
BE TRANSMITTED FORTHWITH BY THE CLERK OF THE
SENATE TO THE TAÍNO PEOPLE.

Legislative Resolution



Assembly No. 1017

BY: M. of A. Rivera, Arroyo,
Diaz, Espallat, Lopez
and Ortiz

COMMEMORATING the historic First Anniversary of the
United Confederation of Taino People

WHEREAS, The Taino People are the descendants of the first Native Peoples of the Americas to greet Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus) in the Year 1492, and have a distinct spiritual and material relationship with the lands, territories, waters and coastal sea, which they have traditionally been connected to, occupied and used from time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, The Taino People have distinct ethnic, cultural and spiritual traditions; history, language; and customs and have organized themselves for their spiritual, social, political, economic and cultural enhancement; and

WHEREAS, The Taino People, being represented by organizations such as Caney Quinto Mundo, Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos, Fundacion Social Luz Cosmica Tania, Presencia Taina, Giboney Tribe and by Cacibajagua have chosen, in solidarity, representatives themselves and established the United Confederation of Taino People; and

WHEREAS, The United States Regional Chapter of the United Confederation of the Taino People, based in New York at 37-14 103rd Street, Suite 2000, Corona, NY 11368, is the voice of the Taino People in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The United Confederation of Taino People is celebrating its historic First Anniversary, which coincides with and recognizes the United Nations International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and the Equinox that signals the beginning of the planting cycle that the Taino People have observed for thousands of years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the efforts of the United Confederation of the Taino People on the occasion of their First Anniversary.

ADOPTED IN ASSEMBLY ON
June 1, 1999

By order of the Assembly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francine M. Misasi".

Francine M. Misasi, Clerk





**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001**

VIRGIN ISLANDS INDIGENOUS NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the annual observances of National American Indian Heritage Month and National Native American Heritage Month in the United States of America, honor, acknowledge and respectfully celebrate the contributions of people of Indigenous Native American ancestry, heritage and culture. It is only fitting that the Virgin Islands of the United States of America, respectfully honor the civilization narratives, traditions, genealogical linkages, and rich culture being restored by descendants of Native Amerindian people indigenous to the Caribbean Americas and the wider community throughout the Territory; and

WHEREAS, in the United States Virgin Islands, the month of November is an occasion for Virgin Islanders of Indigenous Caribbean Descent to reaffirm their patriotic ties to the original people of the Caribbean and the United States of America, their cultural ties with Indigenous people, their traditions and heritage with their kith and kin throughout the lands of the Caribbean, Americas and the world. All residents of the diverse ethnic and cultural communities in the Territory are invited to acknowledge and celebrate the vital individual, community, and institutional contributions of Indigenous Caribbean Amerindians and all Indigenous people of the world to the economic, political, cultural, scientific, educational, spiritual, and religious life of the Territory; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, Congress issued a Joint Resolution (Public Law 101-343) which designated the month of November as National American Indian Heritage Month. This commemorative month aims to provide a platform for indigenous native people of the United States of America and its Territories to share their culture, traditions, music, crafts, dance, and ways and concepts of life. This gives indigenous native people the opportunity to express to their community and representatives, their concerns and solutions for building bridges of understanding and friendship in their local area; and

WHEREAS, the VI Department of Planning and Natural Resources State Historic Preservation Office, the VI National Park Service of St. Thomas and St. John, the National Park Service of St. Croix—especially within its Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Reserve that is home to significant heritage sites of early human settlements in St. Croix and the Caribbean Americas continue to support Indigenous Native Amerindian heritage preservation efforts. Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands, and Opi'a Taino International, Inc., spearheaded respectful Indigenous Amerindian historic preservation, educational research, and heritage restoration. As well as, established alliances, ancestral support, respectful collaborations, and cooperative agreements with the United Confederation of Taino People, the Guainia Taino Tribe of Boriken, the Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands (British), and other organizations, nations and families of the Virgin Islands, wider Caribbean, the Americas and beyond.

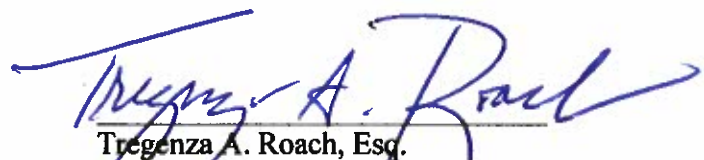
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Albert Bryan Jr., Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby **proclaim the month of November** as “*Virgin Islands Indigenous Native American Heritage Month*” throughout the United States Virgin Islands. I call upon all natives, residents, and visitors of the Territory to respectfully extend this to our family in the wider Caribbean and Americas to support the organizational, individual, and other multicultural events scheduled in honor of these historic, culturally enriching, and appropriate regional, national, and international occasions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, this 28th day of October, A. D. 2022.




Albert Bryan, Jr.
Governor

Attest:


Tregenza A. Roach, Esq.
Lieutenant Governor



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001**

VIRGIN ISLANDS OBSERVANCE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 2021, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. recognized Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 11 via proclamation. Again, in 2022 the President recognized Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 10 honoring the "sovereignty, resilience, and immense contributions that Native Americans have made to the world." Subsequently, President Biden continued to honor Indigenous Peoples' Day through proclamation on October 6, 2023 and recognized the determination to preserve cultures, identities, and ways of life; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day occurs on the second Monday in October in many parts of our nation. This year, it is observed on Monday, October 13, 2025. It is an occasion for Virgin Islanders of Indigenous Amerindian Caribbean Descent to reaffirm their deep ties to the original peoples of the Caribbean and the United States of America, and to celebrate their profound cultural connections with Indigenous people, their rich traditions, and their heritage shared with kin across the expanse of the Caribbean, the Americas, and the world; and

WHEREAS, as a counter-celebration to Columbus Day, the purpose of the day is to promote Indigenous Native Amerindian culture and commemorate the history of Indigenous peoples. The celebration of indigenous people of North America first arose in 1977 from the International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas, sponsored by the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1990, representatives from 120 Indigenous nations at the U.N.'s First Continental Conference on 500 years of Indian Resistance unanimously passed a resolution to transform the holiday known as Columbus Day to educate others about pre-existing Indigenous cultures that have survived a violent colonization process and continue to exist and thrive in the present day; and

WHEREAS, it is important that all citizens of our diverse Territory join in acknowledging and celebrating the invaluable economic, political, cultural, scientific, educational, spiritual, and



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
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**VIRGIN ISLANDS OBSERVANCE OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY**

* * * * *

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

* * * * *

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the annual observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day is an occasion for Virgin Islanders of Indigenous Amerindian Caribbean Descent to reaffirm their patriotic ties to the original peoples of the Caribbean and the United States of America, and their cultural ties with Indigenous People, their traditions and heritage throughout the lands of the Caribbean, Americas and the world. All citizens of the diverse ethnic and cultural communities in the Territory are invited to acknowledge and celebrate the vital individual, community, and institutional contributions of Indigenous Caribbean Amerindians and all Indigenous People of the world to the economic, political, cultural, scientific, educational, spiritual and religious life of the Territory; and

WHEREAS, on Indigenous People's Day, we celebrate the invaluable contributions and resilience of Indigenous peoples, recognize their inherent sovereignty, and commit to honoring the Federal Government's trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, our country was conceived on a promise of equality and opportunity for all people; a promise that, despite the extraordinary progress we have made through the years, we have never fully lived up to. That is especially true when it comes to upholding the rights and dignity of the Indigenous People who were here long before the colonization of the Americas began. For generations, Federal policies systematically sought to assimilate and displace Native people and eradicate Native cultures. Today, we recognize Indigenous People's resilience and strength as well as the immeasurable positive impact that they have made on every aspect of American society. We also recommit to supporting a new, brighter future of promise and equity for Tribal Nations, a future grounded in Tribal sovereignty and respect for the human rights of Indigenous people in the Americas and around the world; and

WHEREAS, in the first week of President Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s administration he issued a memorandum reaffirming the Nation's solemn trust and treaty obligations to American Indians and Alaska Natives Tribal Nations and directed the heads of executive departments and agencies to engage in regular, meaningful, and robust consultations with tribal officials. He said it is a priority of his

administration to make respect for Tribal sovereignty and self-governance the cornerstone of Federal Indian Policy. He stated history demonstrates that Native American people and our Nation on a whole are best served when Tribal governments are empowered to lead their communities and when formulating Federal policy that affects Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS, the contributions that Indigenous peoples have made throughout history, in public service, entrepreneurship, scholarships, the arts, and countless other fields are integral to our Nation, our culture, and our society. Indigenous peoples have served, and continue to serve, in the United States Armed Forces with distinction and honor at one of the highest rates of any group defending our security every day; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government has a solemn obligation to lift up and invest in the future of Indigenous people and empower Tribal Nations to govern their own communities and make their own decisions. We must never forget the centuries-long campaign of violence, displacement, assimilation, and terror wrought upon Native communities and Tribal Nations throughout our country. Today, we acknowledge the significant sacrifices made by the Native peoples of this country and recognize their ongoing contributions to our Nation's first inhabitants and the Tribal Nations that continue to thrive today; and

WHEREAS, research, DNA-testing, and oral tradition have proven that there are descendants of Indigenous Amerindian people living in the Virgin Islands. The Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands has been directed by Maekiaphan Phillips since May 2012. The tribal membership of the Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands, as attested by their signatures and in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, formally conferred on Maekiaphan Phillips the rank and honor of Kasike (Chief) and Chairwoman of the Guainia Taino of the Virgin Islands' Tribal Council; and

WHEREAS, Protections of Indigenous Amerindian sacred sites, lands, artifacts and cultural heritage traditions is a prime goal of the Administration, including Salt River Bay, Maroon Sanctuary in Annaly Bay, and Salt Pond in St. Croix; Reef Bay, Hull Bay and Cinnamon Bay in St. John; and Botany Bay, Magens Bay, and Tutu Park in St. Thomas; and other sacred VI historic and cultural heritage sites. We also seek to extend the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of Public Law 101-601 dated November 16, 1990 "an Act to provide for the protection of Native American graves, and for other purposes."; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Amerindian people of the Caribbean have contributed to the national tradition of every aspect of our society—from agriculture and science to business and the arts. As the international community celebrates and commemorates the Indigenous People let us honor their history, culture, and essential roles within the American and Virgin Islands heritage narratives. Respectful Indigenous Amerindian historic preservation, educational research, and heritage restoration have been spearheaded by the Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands, the Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands (British), the Guainia Taino Tribe of Boriken, and Opi'a Taino International, Inc., including establishing alliances, ancestral support and cooperative agreements with the United Confederation of Taino People. With sacred intentions and respect for this rich cultural heritage of the Americas, these historic observances and annual events provide a foundation for the creation of a collaborative and cooperative entity within the Virgin Islands and the Caribbean for the territory to recognize, unite,

restore, preserve and respect for Indigenous Amerindian people, traditions, heritage, land, life, and sacred resources; and

WHEREAS, on Indigenous Peoples' Day we honor America's first inhabitants and the Tribal Nations that continue to thrive today. I encourage everyone to celebrate the many Indigenous communities and cultures that make up our great country.

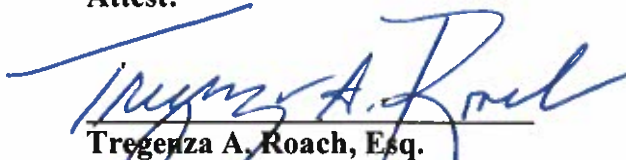
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Albert Bryan, Jr., Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the Authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby proclaim October 10, 2022, Indigenous Peoples' Day throughout the United States Virgin Islands. May our communities continue to ring bells of freedom with respect, solidarity, and harmony with our regional, national, and international sisters and brothers commemorating observing, proclaiming, and celebrating Indigenous People of the World events.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States to be affixed at Christiansted, St. Croix, the Virgin Islands this 4th day of September, A.D. 2022.

A blue ink signature of Albert Bryan Jr. is written over a horizontal line.

Albert Bryan Jr.
Governor

Attest:

A blue ink signature of Tregenza A. Roach is written over a horizontal line.

Tregenza A. Roach, Esq.
Lieutenant Governor