

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 16-0411.01 Kate Meyer x4348

HOUSE BILL 16-1135

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING THE RENAMING OF THE COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY TO THE**
102 **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY HOLIDAY.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

The bill replaces the legal holiday known as Columbus day with Indigenous Peoples' day.

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

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

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

3 (a) In 1492, Christopher Columbus was given authority by the
4 King and Queen of Spain to sail to the Indies to investigate what
5 Columbus described as the "proper method of converting [Indians]" to
6 Christianity. Columbus was granted "sufficient armament" to certain
7 regions of the Indies for such forced conversion.

8 (b) Columbus left Spain on May 12, 1492. He never arrived in the
9 Indies, but came upon an island in the Caribbean later called Hispaniola
10 on October 12, 1492, and met the Taino people.

11 (c) Columbus remarked in *Columbus' Journal of his First Voyage*
12 that he could "conquer the whole of [the Taino people] with fifty men,
13 and govern them as [he] pleased." Columbus' own journal demonstrates
14 that his objective was to find gold and precious stones.

15 (d) Under color of authority of the Spanish crown, and using
16 tactics garnered from his years of involvement in the West African slave
17 trade, Columbus engaged in inhumane acts of slavery, sexual
18 exploitation, murder, and torture, which resulted in the annihilation of the
19 Taino people.

20 (e) Columbus' acts of inhumanity were documented by Bartoleme
21 de las Casas, a Spanish priest, who wrote in his journal:

22 "And Spaniards have behaved in no other way during the
23 past forty years, down to the present time, for they are still
24 acting like ravening beasts, killing, terrorizing, afflicting,
25 torturing, and destroying the native peoples, doing all this
26 with the strangest and most varied new methods of cruelty,
27 never seen or heard of before, and to such a degree that this

1 Island of Hispaniola once so populous (having a population
2 that I estimated to be more than three million), has now a
3 population of barely two hundred persons."

4 "Their reason for killing and destroying such an
5 infinite number of souls is that the Christians have an
6 ultimate aim, which is to acquire gold, and to swell
7 themselves with riches in a very brief time and thus rise to
8 a high estate disproportionate to their merits. It should be
9 kept in mind that their insatiable greed and ambition, the
10 greatest ever seen in the world, is the cause of their
11 villainies."

12 "They attacked the towns and spared neither the
13 children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in
14 childbed, not only stabbing them and dismembering them
15 but cutting them to pieces as if dealing with sheep in a
16 slaughter house. They laid bets as to who, with one stroke
17 of the sword, could split a man in two or could cut off his
18 head or spill out his entrails with a single stroke of the
19 pike."

20 (f) Columbus' cruelty was investigated and he was sent back to
21 Spain in chains, but because of the enormous wealth realized through his
22 exploits, the Spanish Crown freed Columbus, stripped of all his titles, and
23 allowed him to return to the Caribbean.

24 (g) The Spanish conquest and exploitation of the indigenous
25 peoples of the Americas was soon followed by other European nations.
26 The Columbus voyage triggered one of history's greatest slave trades,
27 pillaging of Earth's natural resources, and a level of inhumanity toward

1 indigenous peoples that still exists today.

2 (2) The general assembly further finds and declares that:

3 (a) Despite all attempts by European and Western Hemisphere
4 governments to eradicate indigenous peoples from the Americas, they
5 have overcome such cruelty, exploitation, and inhumanity;

6 (b) The vast contributions made through indigenous peoples'
7 knowledge, science, philosophy, arts, and culture have enabled modern
8 communities to develop and thrive, and should be recognized and valued;

9 (c) A growing number of cities and states have renamed
10 Columbus day, the second Monday of October, as Indigenous Peoples'
11 day, creating an opportunity to promote appreciation, tolerance,
12 understanding, friendship, and partnerships among indigenous peoples
13 and all other persons; and

14 (d) The State of Colorado recognizes the immeasurable
15 contributions of the Italian-American and Spanish-American
16 communities, which communities should be honored. However, the State
17 of Colorado will not honor Christopher Columbus because of his
18 well-documented crimes against humanity.

19 (3) Therefore, in the pursuit of the goals and responsibilities of
20 promoting knowledge about indigenous peoples, recognizing the
21 atrocities perpetrated against indigenous peoples by Christopher
22 Columbus and others, unifying communities, and combating prejudice
23 and eliminating discrimination against indigenous peoples, it is
24 appropriate to rename Columbus day as Indigenous Peoples' day.

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

27 **24-11-101. Legal holidays - effect.** (1) The following days, viz:

1 The first day of January, commonly called New Year's day; the third
2 Monday in January, which shall be observed as the birthday of Dr. Martin
3 Luther King, Jr.; the third Monday in February, commonly called
4 Washington-Lincoln day; the last Monday in May, commonly called
5 Memorial day; the fourth day of July, commonly called Independence
6 day; the first Monday in September, commonly called Labor day; the
7 second Monday in October, commonly called ~~Columbus~~ INDIGENOUS
8 PEOPLES' day; the eleventh day of November, commonly called Veterans'
9 day; the fourth Thursday in November, commonly called Thanksgiving
10 day; the twenty-fifth day of December, commonly called Christmas day;
11 and any day appointed or recommended by the governor of this state or
12 the president of the United States as a day of fasting or prayer or
13 thanksgiving, are hereby declared to be legal holidays and shall, for all
14 purposes whatsoever, as regards the presenting for payment or acceptance
15 and the protesting and giving notice of the dishonor of bills of exchange,
16 drafts, bank checks, promissory notes, or other negotiable instruments and
17 also for the holding of courts, be treated and considered as is the first day
18 of the week commonly called Sunday.

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

21 **5-1-301. General definitions.** In addition to definitions appearing
22 in subsequent articles, as used in this code, unless the context otherwise
23 requires:

24 (6) "Business day" means any calendar day except Sunday, New
25 Year's day, the third Monday in January observed as the birthday of Dr.
26 Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington-Lincoln day, Memorial day,
27 Independence day, Labor day, ~~Columbus~~ INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' day,

1 Veterans' day, Thanksgiving day, and Christmas day.

2 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 6-1-102, **amend** (2.5)
3 as follows:

4 **6-1-102. Definitions.** As used in this article, unless the context
5 otherwise requires:

6 (2.5) "Business day" means any calendar day except Sunday, New
7 Year's day, the third Monday in January observed as the birthday of Dr.
8 Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington-Lincoln day, Memorial day,
9 Independence day, Labor day, ~~Columbus~~ INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' day,
10 Veterans' day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

11 **SECTION 5. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
12 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
13 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
14 10, 2016, if adjournment sine die is on May 11, 2016); except that, if a
15 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
16 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
17 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
18 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
19 November 2016 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
20 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.