



February 17, 2017

Sent Via Electronic Mail
The Honorable Dean Westlake
Representative, District 40
State Capitol, Rm. 24
Juneau, AK 99801
elizabeth.rexford@akleg.gov

Re: HB 78, Indigenous Peoples Day

Dear Representative Westlake:

The Alaska Federation of Natives writes to express our wholehearted support of HB 78, Indigenous Peoples Day.

AFN is the largest state wide Native organization in Alaska. Our membership includes 12 for-profit regional corporations, 12 regional not-for-profit organizations, 152 village for-profit corporations and 152 Indian tribes. Our mission, among other things, is to advance and enhance the voice of the Native community on issues of mutual concern such as pending state legislation.

HB 78 will not replace Columbus Day, a federal holiday; rather it will make Indigenous Peoples Day a state holiday, co-locating it on the second Monday of October. Four other states are considering similar legislation this year.

Congratulations on introducing, and securing House passage of, this long overdue measure. Alaska Native peoples deserve to be formally recognized for the contributions they have made—and continue to make—to our great state. We look forward to helping you and your colleagues advance HB 78 in the Senate.

Sincerely,
ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

Julie Kitka
President

Cc: Board of Directors