By the President of the United States of America A Proclamation

Media Contact:
For Immediate Release: March 2, 1992
Print PDF

Half a millennium ago, when European explorers amazed their compatriots with stories of a New World, what they actually described was a land that had long been home to America's native peoples. In the Northeast part of this country and along the Northwest coast, generations of tribes fished and hunted; others farmed the rich soils of the Southeast and Great Plains, while nomadic tribes roamed and foraged across the Great Basin. In the arid Southwest, native peoples irrigated the desert, cultivating what land they could. Each tribe formed a thriving community with its own customs, traditions, and system of social order.

The contributions that Native Americans have made to our Nation's history and culture are as numerous and varied as the tribes themselves. Over the years, they have added to their ancient wealth of art and folklore a rich legacy of service and achievement. Today we gratefully recall Native Americans who helped the early European settlers to survive in a strange new land; we salute the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II and all those Native Americans who have distinguished themselves in service to our country; and we remember those men and women of Indian descent—such as the great athlete, Jim Thorpe and our 31st Vice President, Charles Curtis—who have instilled pride in others by reaching the heights of their respective Helds. We also celebrate, with special admiration and gratitude, another enduring legacy of Native Americans: their close attachment to the land and their exemplary stewardship of its natural resources. In virtually every realm of our national life, the contributions of America's original inhabitants and their descendants continue.

During 1992, we will honor this country's native peoples as vital participants in the history of the United States. This year gives us the opportunity to recognize the special place that Native Americans hold in our society, to affirm the right of Indian tribes to exist as sovereign entities, and to seek greater mutual understanding and trust. Therefore, we gratefully salute all American Indians, expressing our support for tribal self-determination and assisting with efforts to celebrate and preserve each tribe's unique cultural heritage.

The Congress, by Public Law 102-188, has designated 1992 as the "Year of the American Indian" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim 1992 as the Year of the American Indian. I encourage Federal, State, and local government officials, interested groups and organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this year with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two

hundred and sixteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Source: Proc. 6407, Year of the American Indian, 1992 – Mar. 2, 1992, *106 Stat. 5229*