

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1592 (Ramos)

As Amended March 25, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Authorizes the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) to enter into an agreement with a California Indian Heritage Center (CIHC) support organization and places requirements on the structure of the CIHC support organization and any agreements made.

Major Provisions

- 1) Authorizes State Parks to enter into an agreement with a CIHC support organization to achieve various purposes, including partnering in the operation and programming of the CIHC; recruiting, hiring, and retaining more diversity of CIHC staff with personal experience and knowledge of California Native American culture and history; entering into staff-sharing agreements; and developing funding sources for, and supporting the development and operation of, the CIHC.
- 2) Requires that a CIHC support organization be a qualified nonprofit organization, as specified, and not directly pay, manage, or supervise state employees or directly manage state capital outlay projects.
- 3) Provides that agreements between State Parks and a CIHC support organization are subject to approval by the Department of Finance and must include clear goals and objectives; commitments of oversight, staffing, and coordination needed to accomplish the goals and objectives; and a requirement that State Parks and the CIHC support organization annually hold a joint public meeting.
- 4) Provides that agreements between State Parks and a CIHC support organization are not subject to advertising or competitive bidding requirements.
- 5) Specifies that any construction, alteration, demolition, installation, or repair work undertaken by or on behalf of the CIHC support organization for the CIHC on property owned by the state constitutes a public work.
- 6) States that this bill does not commit, obligate, or require state funds to be provided in support of the CIHC support organization.

COMMENTS

The CIHC project aims to establish a center of statewide significance to celebrate the living cultures of California tribal communities. The CIHC will be located on a 51-acre site in West Sacramento at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers. The completed CIHC will be a unit of the state park system, and the development is proceeding with engagement between State Parks and tribal communities.

In 1940, the State Indian Museum was established at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park, and remains open today, telling the story of California's diverse indigenous cultures across three major themes: Nature, Spirit, and Family. As early as 1960, State Parks identified a need for a

new and expanded alternative to the State Indian Museum. In 1991, pursuant to the Budget Act of 1990 (Chapter 467, Statutes of 1990), State Parks submitted the "California Indian Museum Study" to the Legislature based on extensive public input with targeted outreach to members of the California Indian community. The study found a high level of interest in a new California Indian Museum as a hub of a statewide network of regional facilities and events. In 2002, SB 2063 (Brulte, Chapter 290, Statutes of 2002) established the California Indian Cultural Center and Museum Task Force [renamed the CIHC Task Force in 2004 by SB 1264 (Natural Resources and Water) Chapter 286, Statutes of 2004] to oversee the development of the CIHC.

In 2007, the CIHC Task Force recommended the West Sacramento site for the CIHC, and this recommendation was accepted by State Parks. In 2008, State Parks, the City of West Sacramento, and the City of West Sacramento Redevelopment Agency reached a master agreement for the transfer of the future CIHC property from the City of West Sacramento Redevelopment Agency to State Parks. In 2011, the State Park and Recreation Commission approved the Final General Plan and Environmental Impact Report for the CIHC.

In 2018, the pace of progress increased, as the Budget Act (Mitchell), Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018, provided \$100 million for the development and construction of the CIHC (although much of this appropriation was later reverted), SB 854 (Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 51, Statutes of 2018, provided that it was the intent of the Legislature that State Parks develop the CIHC, and Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. issued Executive Order B-60-18 ordering the Tribal Advisor to establish the CIHC Task Force and coordinate statewide efforts to engage California Native Americans in consultations on the CIHC. Public input and design are ongoing as the phased buildout commences in 2022, a design firm was selected for the site, in 2023–2024 a statewide outreach campaign was conducted, and in 2025 public input was solicited on Phase 1 design. Phase 1 construction began in April 2026, with completion of the Phase 1 welcome center expected in fall 2026.

As charged by the Legislature, the role of the CIHC Task Force is to oversee the development of the CIHC, including decisions about governance of the completed CIHC. In 2005, the CIHC Task Force recommended that the CIHC be developed and operated through a formal collaboration between State Parks and a new nonprofit organization, and that the CIHC Task Force prepare and approve bylaws for the new organization.

According to the Author

According to the author, "The [CIHC] will become a cultural landmark for our state, a place where visitors from all around the world can learn about the true history of California's First People and be educated on the living cultures that continue to shape this land. It will be a space for tribal communities from across the state to connect with their past, their present, and the future of their tribes. A place where our ancestors will be honored and celebrated for years to come. This bill would help pave the way for this goal by advancing a top priority of ensuring this center is run by tribes for tribes by allowing for [State Parks] to enter into an agreement with a support organization. This collaborative partnership would advance the creation of the [CIHC]."

Arguments in Support

The Jamul Indian Village writes: "We believe this legislation is essential to advancing the development of the [CIHC] and ensuring that tribal voices remain central to its vision and governance." The California Tribal Business Alliance adds: "Establishing this structure will help position [the] CIHC to cultivate partnerships, philanthropic support, and other non-state

resources that may help advance the project and sustain its programming and public mission over time."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill has the following fiscal impact:

Ongoing cost pressure of an unknown amount, likely in excess of \$150,000 (General Fund or special fund), for State Parks to enter into an agreement with a nonprofit in support of the CIHC. While the establishment of an operating agreement may preliminarily be absorbable within State Parks' existing resources, and while the bill language states that this bill "does not commit, obligate, or require state funds to be provided in support of the CIHC support organization," given the broad scope and depth of the collaborative partnership envisioned in this bill, it is conceivable that State Parks may require additional funding for its role as the CIHC project progresses.

The total project cost of the CIHC is \$200 million; the state's share is \$100 million, and a campaign is underway to raise a matching donation of \$100 million for the phased buildout. To date, the state has provided approximately \$13.2 million (General Fund) for the CIHC project – specifically for preliminary plans, working drawings, and initial construction. As part of Governor's FY 2026-27 budget, State Parks is requesting \$842,000 General Fund in FY 2026-27, \$805,000 General Fund in FY 2027-28 and ongoing, and three permanent positions to support the CIHC, enhance public access, and improve visitor recreation experience at the site. In addition, State Parks is requesting a transfer of \$2.1 million in FY 2026-27 from the General Fund to the Natural Resources and Parks Preservation Fund for the construction phase of the CIHC project.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 FY and ongoing.

VOTES

ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 12-0-1

YES: Papan, Jeff Gonzalez, Alanis, Alvarez, Bains, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Gallagher, Hart, Ward, Rogers

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ávila Farías

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

VERSION: March 25, 2026

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