
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1592 (Ramos) - California Indian Heritage Center support organization

Version: March 25, 2026
Urgency: No
Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: N.R. & W. 7 - 0
Mandate: No
Consultant: Ashley Ames

Bill Summary: This bill would authorize the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) to enter into an agreement with a nonprofit California Indian Heritage Center (CIHC) support organization.

Fiscal Impact:

- Ongoing cost pressure of an unknown amount, likely in excess of \$150,000 (General Fund, State Parks and Recreation Fund [SPRF], or other special or bond 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 the 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 the bill, it is conceivable that the department may require additional funding for its role as the CIHC project progresses.

Background: According to State Parks, the 51-acre CIHC site is located in West Sacramento, at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers. In June 2019, the City of West Sacramento completed the transfer of its 43-acre parcel to State Parks to realize the decadeslong-desired buildout of the CIHC. The completed CIHC will be a unit of the state parks system, and the development is proceeding with engagement between State Parks and tribal communities. State Parks notes the CIHC is intended to serve as a center of "statewide significance for cultural preservation, learning and exchange, land stewardship based on Native American values, and a place to engage all visitors in celebrating the living cultures of California tribe communities."

In 2018, an executive order issued by Governor Brown directed the state's Tribal Advisor to establish a task force to oversee the development of the CIHC, including decisions about governance of the completed center. 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.

Proposed Law: This bill, among other things, would:

1. Authorize State Parks to enter into an agreement with a CIHC support organization to achieve numerous specified purposes, such as to partner in the operation and programming of the CIHC to achieve the collective mission of establishing partnerships with California Native American tribes; to recruit, hire, and retain more diversity of CIHC staff with personal experience and knowledge of California Native American culture and history; to apply for, receive, and

expend state funds in support of the CIHC; and to enter into staff-sharing agreements to use essential skills and abilities of state and nonstate employees, as specified.

2. Require a CIHC support organization to meet specified requirements; would outline numerous requirements for the structure, membership, and operation of the CIHC support organization; and would enumerate requirements for any agreement made between State Parks and the CIHC support organization, including that State Parks and the CIHC support organization annually hold a joint public meeting regarding the operation of the CIHC and the activities of the CIHC support organization.
3. Authorize State Parks to enter into supplementary agreements with the CIHC support organization to secure any expertise, capacity, or financial resources necessary to identify, plan, develop, or implement strategic initiatives and projects for the CIHC. Would specify that these agreements would not be subject to advertising or competitive bidding requirements applicable to public works or other public projects. Would provide that the Department of Finance would have 60 days to review and approve or disapprove any agreement or substantial amendment to an agreement between State Parks and a CIHC support organization.
4. Specify 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 would constitute a public work, as specified.
5. State that this bill would not commit, obligate, or require state funds to be provided in support of the CIHC support organization.

Related Legislation:

SB 101 (Wiener, Chapter 4, Statutes of 2025), the Budget Act of 2025, among other provisions, appropriates \$6 million for working drawings and \$3 million for construction of the CIHC.

AB 107 (Gabriel, Chapter 22, Statutes of 2024), the Budget Act of 2024, among other provisions, appropriates an additional \$3,488,000 for preliminary plans of the CIHC.

AB 1150 (Water, Parks, and Wildlife, Chapter 831, Statutes of 2023) authorizes State Parks to enter into community access agreements with eligible entities.

SB 74 (Mitchell, Chapter 6, Statutes of 2020), the Budget Act of 2020, among other provisions reverts the balances of the appropriations for working drawings and construction of the CIHC, totaling \$95,310,000, leaving \$4,690,000 for preliminary plans.

SB 854 (Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 51, Statutes of 2018) states the intent of the Legislature that State Parks develop a CIHC for cultural preservation, learning and exchange, land stewardship, and a place to engage all visitors in celebrating the living cultures of California tribes.

SB 840 (Mitchell, Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018), the Budget Act of 2018, among other provisions, appropriates \$100 million for the design and construction of the CIHC.

AB 1820 (Budget, 2017) would have stated that it was the intent of the Legislature that State Parks develop a CIHC and would have appropriated \$100 million for the design and construction of the CIHC. AB 1820 was held on the Senate floor.

SB 1111 (Pavley, Chapter 540, Statutes of 2016) authorizes State Parks to enter into a statewide agreement with a park support organization.

SB 204 (Pavley, Chapter 573, Statutes of 2015) authorizes State Parks to enter into operating agreements for entire park units even if unnecessary to avoid closure of that park unit.

AB 42 (Huffman, Chapter 450, Statutes of 2011) authorizes State Parks to enter into operating agreements with qualified nonprofit organizations for the development, improvement, restoration, care, maintenance, administration, or operation of a unit or units, or a portion of a unit, of the state park system.

SB 1264 (Natural Resources and Water, Chapter 286, Statutes of 2004) renames the California Indian Cultural Center and Museum Task Force the CIHC Task Force.

SB 2063 (Brulte, Chapter 290, Statutes of 2002) establishes the California Indian Cultural Center and Museum Task Force and tasks it with making recommendations to State Parks on the siting, design, and governance of the cultural center.

Staff Comments: 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.

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