

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1841
Author: Ramos (D), et al.
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORG. COMMITTEE: 14-0, 6/23/26

AYES: Rubio, Valladares, Archuleta, Ashby, Blakespear, Cervantes, Dahle, Hurtado, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Richardson, Smallwood-Cuevas, Wahab, Weber Pierson

NO VOTE RECORDED: Alvarado-Gil

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: State holidays: Native American Day

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill, upon appropriation by the Legislature, entitles state employees to a holiday on the fourth Friday in September, known as “Native American Day,” in lieu of a personal holiday, as specified, and authorizes any state bargaining unit to negotiate for a paid holiday on Native American Day, as specified.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/21/26 address conflicting statutory chaptering issues with similar legislation, as specified.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/18/26 require that the implementation of this bill be contingent upon appropriation by the Legislature, rather than upon the determination of the Department of Human Resources that sufficient funds exist to provide a holiday for all state employees, and add coauthors, as specified.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) States that it is the policy of the state that the workweek of the state employee is 40 hours, and the workday of state employees is eight hours, except as specified.
- 2) Provides that all state employees are entitled to the following holidays: January 1, the third Monday in January, the third Monday in February, March 31, the last Monday in May, July 4, the first Monday in September, November 11, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, December 25, the day chosen by an employee as a personal holiday, and every day appointed by the Governor of this state for a public fast, thanksgiving, or holiday.
- 3) Authorizes any state employee to elect to receive eight hours of holiday credit for the date known as “Lunar New Year,” the date known as “Genocide Remembrance Day,” the date known as “Diwali,” the date known as “Juneteenth,” or the date known as “Native American Day,” in lieu of receiving eight hours of personal holiday credit, as specified.
- 4) Authorizes a state employee to elect to receive eight hours of holiday credit for observance of a holiday or ceremony of the state employee’s religion, culture, or heritage in lieu of receiving eight hours of personal holiday credit, as specified.
- 5) Entitles every employee, upon completion of six months of his or her initial probationary period in state service, to one personal holiday per fiscal year, as specified.
- 6) Establishes the fourth Friday in September, known as “Native American Day,” as a holiday in this state.

This bill:

- 1) Provides that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, all state employees shall be entitled to a holiday on the fourth Friday in September, known as “Native American Day,” in lieu of the personal holiday, as specified.
- 2) Authorizes any state bargaining unit to negotiate to receive this day as a paid holiday as a part of their memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Background

Author Statement. According to the author's office, "Native American Day is a celebration honoring California's First People, their cultures, their achievements, and their resilience after centuries of violence and discrimination. It serves as a reminder that while the state has taken meaningful steps toward addressing the historical injustices committed against Native communities, the work of healing the deep scars that remain has only begun. Establishing Native American Day as an official state holiday affirms the state's commitment to building a long and meaningful relationship with its sovereign tribes. It acknowledges that despite years of displacement and violence, California's First People remain and will continue to be an essential part of the state's history and culture."

Native American Day. Among other things, information provided by the author states that, "[under] Section 19853 of the Gov. Code, Native American Day, the 4th Friday of September, is listed as one of the available holidays state employees may observe using their yearly allowance of personal holidays." While this policy acknowledges Native American Day as a holiday and allows state employees the option to observe it with pay, the policy does not adequately emphasize the significance of this day to California's history and culture.

In 2021, the California Legislature passed AB 855 (Ramos, Chapter 283, Statutes of 2021) making Native American Day a paid judicial holiday and removing Columbus Day from its approved list of observed holidays. This change was part of the Judicial Branch's ongoing efforts to modernize itself and provide recognition of the importance of diversity within the court system. However, while the Judicial Branch now formally observes Native American Day, the remainder of state government does not. Under current law, most state employees may observe the day only by using a personal holiday, which results in an uneven recognition and inconsistent treatment of this important cultural holiday for California tribes. This bill is intended to correct that disparity and ensure that Native American Day is recognized uniformly across all branches of state government.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 2017 (Haney, 2026) would add the first day of the month of Shawwal in the Islamic lunar calendar, known as "Eid al-Fitr," and the 10th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah in the Islamic lunar calendar, known as "Eid al-Adha" to the existing list of state holidays, as specified. (Pending on the Senate Floor)

AB 2294 (Ta, 2026) designates “Sylvia Mendez Day” as a state holiday, as specified. (Pending on the Senate Floor)

AB 2455 (Haney, 2026, Chapter 49, Statutes of 20026) requires the Governor to annually proclaim May 17 as “Bruce Lee Day,” and designates and sets apart that date each year as having special significance, as specified.

AB 855 (Ramos, Chapter 283, Statutes of 2021) replaced Columbus Day with Native American Day as an approved judicial holiday.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, CalHR reports annual costs of approximately \$16.3 million (\$12.2 million General Fund) to provide state employees with an additional paid holiday. While the bill makes the holiday contingent upon a determination by CalHR, the department notes that assessing fund sufficiency falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Finance.

Additionally, if the holiday is phased in over-time across multiple bargaining units, CalHR notes that overall state costs will change, and likely increase, depending on unit membership, salary ranges, and future wage increases.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO
California Native Vote Project
California Rural Indian Health Board, INC.
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Office of the Mayor - City of San Bernardino
Redding Rancheria
Service Employees International Union, Local 1000
Wilton Rancheria
Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
Yurok Tribe

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: In support of this bill, the California Native American Vote Project writes that, “[a]s an organization dedicated to advancing civic engagement and political power in Native American communities across California, the California Native Vote Project works to ensure Native voices are heard, respected, and represented at all levels of government. Recognizing Native American Day as an official state holiday aligns with our mission to uplift Native identities, cultures, and histories, and reflects an ongoing commitment to equity, visibility, and tribal sovereignty.”

Further, “AB 1841 would make Native American Day, the fourth Friday in September, an official paid holiday for state employees. We believe this bill elevates the importance of this historic day, not just for native people, but all Californians. Native American Day is a celebration of the resilience of California’s First People and their struggle for survival. More importantly, it serves as a reminder to all that there is still more work to be done to help heal the scars of violence and discrimination that many tribes bare to this day.

And finally, “[i]n addition to its symbolic importance, Native American Day would serve as an opportunity for the public to learn more about California’s history. Formal recognition would encourage communities to dedicate time to learning about the people who inhabited these lands long before it was ever a state.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 5/26/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: DeMaio, Gallagher, Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

Prepared by: Brian Duke / G.O. / (916) 651-1530
8/24/26 11:23:43

**** END ****