
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2115 (Ramos) - California Native Americans: formal apology

Version: February 18, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: JUD. 11 - 0, G.O. 14 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Bob Franzoia

Bill Summary: AB 2115 would require the State of California to recognize and accept responsibility for harms committed against California Native Americans. The bill would require a plaque memorializing this apology to be installed in the State Capitol Building and would authorize the Department of General Services and the Joint Rules Committee to receive money from grants and private donations.

Fiscal Impact: \$500,000 to \$1 million one time to design and install a plaque memorializing this apology. Minor absorbable costs annually for maintenance (federal, General Fund, local, private).

Background: In 2001, the Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 978 (Chapter 818 of the Statutes of 2001), the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001, requiring all state agencies and state-funded museums that possess collections of Native American human remains or cultural items to establish a process for identifying and repatriating those items to the appropriate tribes.

In 2019, Governor Newsom issued an apology to California Native Americans through Executive Order No. N-15-19, which also established the California Truth and Healing Council.

Proposed Law: The Secretary of State shall submit a final copy of this formal apology to the State Archives, where it shall be available for viewing by the public in perpetuity. The Legislature shall prepare the formal apology, which shall bear the Great Seal of the State and requests that this apology be signed by the Speaker of the Assembly, the President pro Tempore of the Senate, the Governor, and the Chief Justice of California.

Related Legislation: AB 3089 (Jones-Sawyer) Chapter 624/2024 provides that the State of California recognizes and accepts responsibility for all of the harms committed by the state in connection with chattel slavery and its enduring legacy, issues an apology from the State of California for perpetuating the harms African Americans face through state and private action, and requires a plaque memorializing the apology to be installed in the State Capitol.

SB 670 (Dunn) Chapter 663/2005 expresses the apology of the State of California to the victims that were illegally deported or coerced into leaving the United States under the Mexican Repatriation Program of the 1930's and requires a plaque be placed in be installed and maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation in an appropriate public place in Los Angeles to commemorate the victims of the repatriation program.

Staff Comments: This bill calls for a plaque memorializing this apology, included in the contents of Government Code Sections 8304.1 and 8304.2, as added by the bill, to be installed and maintained publicly and conspicuously in the State Capitol Building.

Sections 8304.1 and 8304.2 contain approximately 2,100 words.

The approximately 900 word plaque authorized by AB 3089 (Jones-Sawyer) (see Related Legislation above) remains in the design stage.

For reference, the Gettysburg Address was 271 words.

Recommended Amendments: Parameters governing the size, word content and materials of the plaque should be set forth in statute.

Proposed Author Amendments: The author has suspense file amendments which (1) require the development of a plan for the long term maintenance of the plaque and (2) are technical and clarifying.