



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 565 – Indigenous Peoples' Day - Rule of Interpretation and Replacement of Columbus Day

SPONSOR: Delegates W. Fisher, *et al.*

HEARING DATE: March 15, 2022

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 565 – Indigenous Peoples' Day - Rule of Interpretation and Replacement of Columbus Day**, which replaces “Columbus Day” with “Indigenous Peoples Day.”

The U.S. Census reported that in 2017, American Indians/Alaska Natives represented 1.7% of the nation's population. The Migration Policy Institute also reported that in 2017, American Indians/Alaska Natives represented 0.7% of Maryland's population (0.4% foreign born, 0.3% U.S. born). The intention of Indigenous Peoples' Day is to celebrate and acknowledge the perspective of Native American history and culture. Whereas some cultural groups, including Indigenous Peoples, could be offended by the celebration of Columbus Day, this Bill encourages acknowledgement of a holiday that will redirect colonial oppression and bring attention to indigenous rights and national social justice.

In September 2019, the Prince George's County Council passed CB-008-2019, which replaced Columbus Day with Native American Day to recognize the history, culture, and accomplishments of Native Americans in Prince George's County. Additionally, the Prince George's County's Human Relations Commission (HRC) encourages the growth and development of Prince George's County to promote equal opportunity for all individuals. The HRC also welcomes opportunities to commemorate any groups of people who have experienced any forms of civil or social injustice in an effort to bring awareness to national civil rights.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 565** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.