



October 11, 2021

## **Recognizing Indigenous Peoples' Day**

I'm proud to stand with Tribes and Pueblos in New Mexico who have led the way to re-frame today's federal holiday to honor all of the significant contributions and diverse cultures of our Native communities. That's why I am leading the effort to introduce the [first-ever legislation](#) in the Senate to replace the official holiday recognized on the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples' Day. Two years ago, New Mexico joined the growing national movement—which now includes 13 states and more than 100 cities—that has recognized this change.

Supporting Tribal sovereignty and reckoning with our history goes beyond just one day. Last month, I joined U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren to reintroduce legislation to establish a Truth and Healing Commission to investigate the federal government's policies that stripped children from their families and sent them to abusive Indian Boarding Schools. I am working to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act and improve the federal government's response to the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women. And I am fighting to pass legislation to prohibit the theft and illegal export of sacred Tribal cultural items.

Just last week, I welcomed President Biden's restoration of the culturally significant landscapes in Bears Ears National Monument. Now that President Biden has restored these important protections, I hope that his administration under the leadership of Secretary Deb Haaland will manage Bears Ears in close coordination with the Tribal Nations who continue to have strong cultural ties to its dramatic landscape of rim rock canyons and mesas. I will continue to stand with Tribal Nations to protect sacred lands like Bears Ears and the greater Chaco region.

I will also keep doing everything in my power to make sure Tribal Nations in New Mexico have the resources and support they need to protect the health of their communities and build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. I was proud to secure more than \$31 billion in emergency support for Indian Country as part of the larger American Rescue Plan that Democrats in Congress passed earlier this year. And I am committed to getting President Biden's Build Back Better agenda across the finish line to steer even more critical investments in health care, education, high-speed internet, clean water, and housing to Tribal communities.

I hope you will join me in recognizing the sovereignty and honoring the diverse cultures of America's Tribal Nations by celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day.