

STATE OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the original stewards of the land now called Illinois are the Council of the Three Fires - the Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi and Ho-Chunk Nations, along with the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Sauk and Fox, Mesquaki, Menominee, Kickapoo and Chickasaw Nations, and other Tribal Nations; and,

WHEREAS, nearly 87,500 American Indian and Alaska Native people lived in Illinois in 2023, making it the 11th highest in the country, along with the largest Native American population in the Midwest, and the oldest urban American Indian Center in the United States is in Chicago; and,

WHEREAS, history has been shaped, defined, and continues to be transformed by numerous Native American Illinoisans and Tribal Nations, whose significant contributions, cultural impact, political leadership, and social justice advocacy have become intrinsic to state and national history; and,

WHEREAS, Native American Heritage Month serves as a powerful reminder for Illinois to reflect upon and strengthen its efforts in equity initiatives, including supporting and celebrating vibrant Native American-owned businesses, especially as Native American communities and other minority groups have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, since Illinois' inception, Native American-owned businesses have played an instrumental role in Illinois' communities by making innovative products and providing high-quality services to help make the economy dynamic and vibrant; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois is committed to supporting the continued growth and advancement of Native American-owned firms and enterprises through programs offered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment (OE3), aimed at connecting Native American business startups, entrepreneurs, and business owners with resources to grow and thrive; and,

WHEREAS, Native American Heritage Month is an opportunity to pay tribute to the approximately 8,900 American Indian and Alaska Native-owned businesses in Illinois and encourage all Illinoisans to support Native American-owned businesses in November and year-round;

THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim the month of November 2024 as **Native American Heritage Month** in Illinois, celebrating the impact of Native American Illinoisans and businesses across the state.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,
this SIXTH *day of* NOVEMBER, *in*
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and
TWENTY-FOUR, *and of the State of Illinois,*
two hundred and FIFTH.



Alexis Bianchi
SECRETARY OF STATE

JB Pritzker
GOVERNOR