
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 108 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY BISHOP, LAUGHLIN, ROBINSON, CALTAGIRONE, READSHAW,
STEELMAN, CORRIGAN, DALEY, BELFANTI, HERSHEY, SOLOBAY,
PISTELLA, HARHAI, EACHUS, COSTA, C. WILLIAMS, JOSEPHS,
PRESTON, HORSEY, WATERS AND COLAFELLA, MARCH 20, 2001

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 20, 2001

A RESOLUTION

1 Calling on the United States Department of the Interior to
2 rescind its order to the Piscataway Indian Nation requiring
3 the dismantling of the sacred sweat lodge at the Tayac Burial
4 Site in Piscataway National Park in Maryland.

5 WHEREAS, A sacred sweat lodge is the traditional way of
6 cleansing body, mind and spirit using a pit containing hot
7 rocks; and

8 WHEREAS, Native Americans or other individuals sit inside in
9 darkness, sweating together and making prayers or declarations,
10 creating a ritual with spiritual and healing intent; and

11 WHEREAS, By sweat and prayer they clean their bodies of
12 toxins, their minds of negativities and heighten their spirits,
13 coming into a balanced relationship with all that surrounds
14 them; and

15 WHEREAS, This tradition is found in one form or another in
16 many ethnic cultures; and

17 WHEREAS, Because the Piscataway Indian Nation's sweat lodge

1 is located on sacred burial ground, the Department of the
2 Interior's call for its dismantling after use in ceremonies
3 violates the protection of religious freedom guaranteed by the
4 Constitution of the United States as well as long-established
5 precedents respecting the rights of Native Americans; and

6 WHEREAS, Requiring the desecration of sacred ancestral burial
7 grounds harms Native Americans and all Americans who support the
8 causes of this nation's original inhabitants; therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
10 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania call upon Secretary of the Interior
11 Gale Norton to reconsider the decision to require the
12 dismantling of the sacred sweat lodge at the Tayac Burial Site
13 in Piscataway National Park in Maryland and allow the Piscataway
14 Indian Nation to continue to celebrate their Native American
15 culture in the manner established by their ancestors.