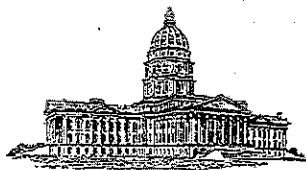


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Ponka-We Victors  
Representative, 103rd District

January 22, 2021

**House Federal & State Affairs Committee  
Representative John Barker, Chairman**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2006 that will abolish Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous Peoples Day. The passage of this bill seeks truth and dispels the myth that Columbus discovered America. Changing this day will celebrate the Indigenous peoples' survival, resilience and deep contributions to all peoples that now live on this land. It's estimated that there were 25 million Indigenous Peoples in the Americas long before Columbus discovered America. Columbus was the first slave trader in the Americas and began by trading Indigenous peoples. However, as the population was decimated, they were replaced with Black slaves. As part of that slave trade, he supervised the selling of young Indigenous girls, as young as 9 and 10 years old, into sex slavery. Celebrating Columbus means celebrating his actions, which include the murder, rape, and enslavement of Indigenous peoples.

The Columbus holiday was intact in 1934, a time where Native Americans did not have the right to vote in most states and where Jim Crow laws were still on the books also before the Civil Rights Movement. Indigenous Peoples Day has been adopted in more than 60 cities across the country, including Lawrence, and by many other cities. Repealing Columbus Day will counter the negative images, stereotypes, and false history that our children are subjected to during this time of year.

We are asking the House Federal and State Affairs committee to correct this error and to reconcile without our past and forge a future that helps us all. The repeal is a step towards racial truth that we are so desperately in need of. We ask you to join us in making this first step to correct history and take a step towards healing—for Indigenous peoples in Kansas, for the integrity of our country, and for all of humanity.

Best,

*Rep. Dr. Victory*

Rep. Dr. Ponka-We Victors, District 103