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House of Representatives

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Ponka-We Victors
Representative, 103rd District

March 18, 2013

House Federal and State Affairs Committee
Kansas State Capitol Building
300 SW 10th
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Chairman Siegfried and members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee,

It is my most gracious honor to bring before you today SB111. This bill will make the first Wednesday of every February the official "Native American Legislative Day". It is not only a day to celebrate the rich culture and history of the Kansas Tribes and their economic impact to the state of Kansas but it is also to address legislative issues and bills that may affect the tribes of Kansas. It is imperative to develop and build stronger relationships between the Tribes of Kansas and the State. This will strengthen government to government relationships and educate the public about Native American issues with the goal of improving the quality of life for all people.

Several states across our country have passed similar bills allowing the tribes of their respected state the opportunity to become active and informed about the legislative process and establishing their presence in the Capitol. It would also be an enormous asset to our legislators and state employees to look to our tribal leaders of Kansas tribes and inquire about their government, their issues, and to explore new perspectives of prosperity. I believe we can all benefit from uniting our resources, talents, experiences and knowledge to make Kansas the state that provides leadership to the rest of our great nation. It will transpire by working together and sharing our irreplaceable abilities. As we look to the past of how the Santa Fe Trail brought settlers to "Kawn-ze" (the people of the south wind), let us remember how those relationships brought us the Kansas we know and love today. Thank you for your valuable time. I now ask this committee to please pass out SB111 favorably.

Sincerely,

Ponka-We