

*WHEREAS*, members and descendants of tribes around the United States and First Nations of Canada also reside in the state of Washington; and

*WHEREAS*, Native American contributions and values have shaped the social, political, environmental, and economic fabric of the state, while also enhancing freedom, prosperity, and cultural diversity; and

*WHEREAS*, the novel coronavirus has affected us all, but is of particular concern to tribal communities. Historically, Native Americans have faced many foreign diseases and turned to their cultural knowledge as a resource during difficult times, which holds true today during the battle against COVID-19. Tribes and Indian organizations are actively working to protect elders, tribal communities, and families from the spread of COVID-19; and

*WHEREAS*, state law, RCW 43.376, directs the Governor and state agencies to establish government to government relationships with Indian tribes in order to enhance and formalize working relationships with the tribes through collaboration and consultation;

*WHEREAS*, state law, RCW 28A.320.170, mandates the teaching of tribal history, culture, and government in common schools; which will contribute greatly to improving school's history curriculum and enhances awareness for a better cultural understanding; and

*WHEREAS*, the state of Washington has designated the Friday immediately following the fourth Thursday in November, a state legal and school holiday, known as Native American Heritage Day; and

*WHEREAS*, Washington joins other states across the nation in celebrating Native American Heritage Month, honoring the unique heritage of this continent's First People, and reaffirming the commitment to respect each tribe's sovereignty and cultural identity;