



City of Lawrence

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February 5, 2019

Representative John Barker
Chair – House Federal and State Affairs Committee
Rm. 346 South, Statehouse
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: House Bill 2009

Dear Representative Barker and Committee Members,

The City of Lawrence strongly supports the passage of House Bill 2009. In October of 2015, then Mayor of Lawrence (now House Representative) Mike Amyx, proclaimed Monday, October 12, 2015 as Indigenous Peoples Day. The proclamation recognized that Lawrence was built upon the homelands of the Kanza and Osage Indigenous Peoples. It also recognized that Lawrence is home to Haskell Indian Nations University attended by Indigenous Peoples from the 48 contiguous states of the US and Alaska. Finally, the proclamation noted the many contributions made to the Lawrence community by and through the Indigenous Peoples who have attended Haskell and those who have called Lawrence home. This proclamation was accepted by representatives of numerous tribes and it helped bring unity to all of Lawrence.

The City of Lawrence public school district, USD 497, recently renamed one of our middle schools in honor of an indigenous person. South Middle School is now known as Billy Mills Middle School. Billy Mills is a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and won a gold medal in the 10,000-meter race at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics representing the United States.

Changing the observance of Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day is long overdue. The Seal of the Great State of Kansas recognizes Indigenous Peoples. It does not have an image of Columbus on it. It is time that Kansas, as an official observed state holiday, does so as well.

On behalf of the residents of Lawrence, I urge you to pass House Bill 2009.

Sincerely,

Lisa Larsen
Mayor

