

**STATEMENT OF LESTER J. RANDALL
KICKAPOO TRIBE IN KANSAS
HOUSE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Regarding 2019 HOUSE BILL 2009
FEBRUARY 6, 2019**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members. My name is Nethawahquatwa, meaning Water Running in Three Different Directions. I am of the Water Clan. I am Lester Randall and I am the Chairman of the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas. I want to thank you for allowing me to come before you today to testify on HB 2009, an Act concerning legal public holidays and designating Indigenous Peoples Day on the second Monday in October.

Colonial takeovers of the Americas, starting with Christopher Columbus, led to the deaths of millions of Native people and forever changed the landscape of tribal communities throughout our Nation. The painful history of Native Americans in this Country is one that cannot be erased or forgotten but the narrative of those experiences can be reshaped.

In formally proclaiming November 2013 as *National American Indian Heritage Month*, Governor Sam Brownback recognized, “the history and culture of our great nation and the State of Kansas have been significantly influenced by American Indians and indigenous peoples. By changing the second Monday in October to Indigenous Peoples Day, the State of Kansas can further demonstrate awareness of the rich history, culture and traditions of the Indigenous peoples of America and the resident Indian Tribes in our State.

I come before you to express my support of HB 2009 to change the second Monday in October to Indigenous Peoples Day and I ask for your endorsement of this bill. Through passage of this legislation, the State of Kansas shows respect for the pain and suffering reflected in the history of our collective tribal communities and will continue to strengthen the relationship the State and tribal governments have today.

I thank you sincerely for your time and consideration and I am open for any questions you may have.

Kiipichii. Thank you.