



2021 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Commemoration 824

Introduced by: **Senators** Foster, Castleberry, Nesiba, and Schoenbeck and **Representative** Perry

1 **A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Honoring the life and public service of former**
 2 **State Senator Theresa "Huck" Two Bulls, "Wiyaka Tokaheya Yuha Najin," the**
 3 **first Native American woman elected to the South Dakota State Senate.**

4 WHEREAS, Theresa Two Bulls was born October 23, 1949. She grew up on the Pine Ridge
 5 Indian Reservation, graduated from Pine Ridge High School in 1967, and earned a degree in
 6 law from Haskell Indian University in 1969. She thereafter became a trailblazer, a persistent
 7 voice for the Oglala Nation, and an avid protector of Native American voting rights; and

8 WHEREAS, Theresa's passion in life was service to South Dakotans, in addition to being a
 9 mother, wife, grandmother, sister, mentor, and friend. She demonstrated all the qualities of
 10 being a good relative and leader for all her Oceti Sakowin relatives; and

11 WHEREAS, Theresa was elected to four terms as a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribal
 12 Council from 1990-1998 and served as the Oglala Sioux Tribe's Vice-President from 2000-
 13 2002; and

14 WHEREAS, Theresa served as a prosecutor for the South Dakota Attorney General's Office
 15 before being elected as a South Dakota senator in 2004; and

16 WHEREAS, Theresa served on the State-Tribal Relations Committee, the Health and
 17 Human Services Committee, the Local Government Committee, and served on a national task
 18 force to assist the Department of Justice in developing guidelines for a study on violence
 19 against Native American women; and

20 WHEREAS, Theresa became only the second woman ever elected as president of the Oglala
 21 Sioux Tribe in 2008; and

22 WHEREAS, Theresa's love, leadership, and ability to "get-the-job-done" caused her work
 23 to impact many areas in OST Tribal government, state Democratic politics, and beyond.
 24 Evidence of Theresa's undeniable influence will remain for years to come. Theresa, in the

1 months before her passing, remained committed to inspiring young and old alike to become
2 involved in their community and vote in the 2020 elections. She invested a great deal of her
3 time to help guide the Oglala Nation throughout the Covid-19 pandemic—her final act of
4 selfless commitment to the Oglala Sioux Tribe; and

5 WHEREAS, Theresa was mother and grandmother to seven children and eleven
6 grandchildren. She was the family matriarch, and always ready to stand up for what was right
7 and to lend a voice to the voiceless—exemplifying the definition of a good relative:

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Sixth Legislature of the State
9 of South Dakota, that Theresa "Huck" Two Bulls be recognized for a life well-lived, her
10 perseverance and tenacity that shattered glass ceilings, and her many years of dedicated
11 service to all South Dakotans. Theresa stands as a purposeful role model for others to follow.