

# South Dakota Legislature



## Senate Commemoration 823

Introduced by: **Senator Foster**

**A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Honoring the life and service of Jesse "Jay" Taken Alive (Niyake Yuza) and Cheryl Taken Alive (Anpao Tate Win) of McLaughlin.**

WHEREAS, Jesse "Jay" Taken Alive was born May 1, 1955, in Fort Yates, North Dakota, on the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation. Jay graduated from Fort Yates High School in 1973. Jay was a member of the Fort Yates High School boys basketball team, which won the 1973 North Dakota Class A State Tournament, and attended Black Hills State College in Spearfish. He devoted his life to remembering Lakota history, upholding Lakota cultural teachings, and preserving the Lakota language; and

WHEREAS, Cheryl Taken Alive was born January 16, 1956, in Fort Yates, North Dakota, on the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation. Cheryl graduated from Fort Yates High School in 1974. Cheryl was the 1973 Fort Yates High School Homecoming Queen, and attended Standing Rock College. She dedicated her life to enhancing the quality of life for countless individuals and families on the Standing Rock Reservation through her career in the human services field; and

WHEREAS, Jay and Cheryl were united in marriage in Little Eagle on January 2, 1975, and made their home in McLaughlin where they raised their five children and doted on their ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Jay served as an elected member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council from 1991 to 2015, including serving a term as Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman from 1993 to 1997. He also served as a member of the McLaughlin Public School Board of Education, the Boys and Girls Club of Standing Rock Board of Directors, the United Tribes Technical College Board of Directors, and the KLND Radio Board of Directors. After his retirement from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council, Jay found his perfect job in serving as a certified Lakota Language and Culture teacher at McLaughlin High School; and

WHEREAS, Cheryl cherished her role as a wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. She applied her loving and compassionate nature to her work with numerous families on the Standing Rock Reservation by strengthening family bonds in accordance with Lakota cultural practices and spiritual beliefs; and

---

# South Dakota Legislature



WHEREAS, Jay and Cheryl loved and supported their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren unconditionally, and extended that same level of love and support to the young people in their community. They were the biggest fans of McLaughlin High School sports and attended many school activities where they were affectionately known as "Lala Jay" and "Unci Cheryl;" and

WHEREAS, Jay and Cheryl maintained a steadfast faith in Wakan Tanka, and lived their life together in prayer and service to humanity. They strived to embody Lakota values every day, which included being a good relative and loving their fellow South Dakotans throughout their nearly forty-six years of marriage; and

WHEREAS, Jay's and Cheryl's untimely passing from the COVID-19 virus broke the hearts of all those who loved and respected them. However, their love story, steadfast faith, and service to humanity comprise a wonderful legacy that will inspire generations to come:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Sixth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that Jesse "Jay" and Cheryl Taken Alive be recognized for a life well-lived together, their inspiring story of love, their devotion to family, their unconditional support for children and youth, their preservation of Lakota language and culture, and their years of dedicated service to Standing Rock Reservation communities.

