South Dakota Legislature

Senate Commemoration 816

Introduced by: ***Senators*** *Foster, Bordeaux, Deibert, Duhamel, Larson, Mehlhaff, Nesiba, Reed, Schoenbeck, Schoenfish, and Stalzer and* ***Representatives*** *Bartels, Duba, Emery, Kull, Moore, Olson, Perry, Pinnow, Pourier, Reisch, St. John, Stevens, Venhuizen, and Wittman*

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Recognizing and honoring Kevin Locke, a world-famous Hoop Dancer, player of the North American Indigenous flute, traditional storyteller, cultural ambassador, and educator.

WHEREAS, Kevin Edward Locke, whose Lakota name is Tȟokéya Inážiŋ, meaning "The First to Arise", became a skilled musician of the North American Indigenous flute. He learned to make and play the flute from the elders of his tribe, and in doing so helped preserve and share the traditions of his people. He was regarded as one of the foremost scholars of the North American Indigenous flute, a term which he helped create. His advocacy of indigenous music led to the Legislature passing House Bill 1196 in 2022, designating the traditional flute as the official indigenous musical instrument of South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Edward Locke worked tirelessly to educate others about Lakota culture. He performed the Sioux hoop dance in public and tribal schools in both South Dakota and North Dakota over his lifetime, helping teach children about the Lakota language, music, and beliefs, and promoting a positive relationship between Indian and non-Indian children; and

WHEREAS, from 1978 until his death, Kevin Edward Locke visited more than ninety countries to share and educate others about his culture. His extensive travels have helped inform others of Lakota traditions and have honored South Dakota and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. He served as a cultural ambassador for the United States Information Service beginning in 1980, served as a delegate to the 1992 Earth Summit in Brazil, and attended the 1996 United Nations Habitat II Conference in Turkey as a featured performer and speaker:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Eighth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that Kevin Edward Locke be honored and recognized for his lifetime of advocacy and education of Lakota culture.