

# South Dakota Legislature



## Senate Commemoration 809

Introduced by: **Senators** Foster, Duhamel, Perry, and Schoenfish and **Representatives** Emery, Ismay, Muckey, Pourier, and Uhre-Balk

**A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Honoring Bryan Brewer, Sr., for his visionary leadership, transformative impact, and unwavering dedication to advancing athletics, academics, and community empowerment.**

WHEREAS, Bryan Brewer, Sr., was born in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, on February 4, 1947, the son of Vincent and Alvina Brewer, and is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe; and

WHEREAS, Bryan's Lakota name, Ohiyaku, means, "returns victoriously", which has come to symbolize his life of service, triumph, and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Bryan served his country honorably as a United States Navy Seabee during the Vietnam War, completing two tours and earning recognition as a combat veteran; and

WHEREAS, Bryan is the proud father of four children and grandfather to four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, who have all been influenced by his vision and guidance; and

WHEREAS, Bryan graduated from Black Hills State University in 1976 with a bachelor's degree in secondary education and dedicated thirty-three years to the education field as a teacher, coach, principal, athletic director, and dean of students, serving at Pine Ridge and Red Cloud High School, and at the Rocky Boy Tribal High School in Rocky Boy, Montana; and

WHEREAS, Bryan's most significant contribution to the state of South Dakota was his founding of the Lakota Nation Invitational, an event that has grown from a small basketball tournament to a celebration of athletics, academics, fine arts, and culture for the last forty-seven years; and

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WHEREAS, the Lakota Nation Invitational has become one of the most prestigious events in South Dakota, fostering racial reconciliation, uniting the Oceti Sakowin tribes, and honoring military service men and women, while highlighting the talents of the state's youth; and

WHEREAS, Bryan's leadership in the Lakota Nation Invitational has led to recognition as South Dakota's premier event by Sports Illustrated magazine, and contributed to the empowerment of youth for over four decades, creating a history of champions; and

WHEREAS, Bryan served as a member of the South Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors from 2004 to 2009, becoming the first Native American to hold the position, and advocating for Native American students and increasing awareness of their unique challenges; and

WHEREAS, Bryan served as president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe from 2012 to 2016, in which he earned recognition as an environmental advocate, opposing the Keystone XL pipeline, and securing a permanent shutdown of liquor sales in White Clay, Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the South Dakota High School Coaches Association created the Spirit of Influence Award to be given annually in honor of Bryan to recognize his enduring legacy of leadership and positive influence on students; and

WHEREAS, Bryan was inducted into the South Dakota Sports Hall of Fame in 2022, a recognition of his monumental contributions to the state's athletic, academic, and cultural communities; and

WHEREAS, Bryan's unparalleled dedication to improving education, empowering youth, and expanding opportunities for future generations serves as an inspiring example of leadership and selflessness for all South Dakotans;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the One Hundredth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that Bryan Brewer, Sr., has made a positive difference to his community, his people, and the state of South Dakota, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

