



2026 South Dakota Legislature

House Commemoration 8022

Introduced by: **Representative Poirier**

1 **A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION recognizing the achievements, leadership, and**
2 **lifelong public service of Cecelia Fire Thunder.**

3 WHEREAS, Cecelia Fire Thunder has devoted her life to advocacy, education, and
4 leadership within her Oglala Lakota community, blazing a trail for Indigenous women in
5 governance and public health; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2004, Cecelia Fire Thunder became the first woman elected to serve as
7 president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, setting a new milestone for women's leadership in tribal
8 government; and

9 WHEREAS, throughout her career, Cecelia Fire Thunder has been an unwavering advocate
10 for the self-determination, health, and wellbeing of Native peoples, notably as a registered
11 nurse, health educator, and community organizer; and

12 WHEREAS, Cecelia Fire Thunder continues to inspire emerging leaders by demonstrating
13 courage, integrity, and commitment to building bridges between tribal nations and this state;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, her vision and advocacy embody the Lakota value of woohitika, or strength
16 and bravery in service to one's people;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the One Hundred First Legislature of the
18 State of South Dakota, that Cecelia Fire Thunder deserves honor and recognition for her
19 historic accomplishments, her lifelong advocacy for indigenous rights and women's
20 empowerment, and her enduring contributions to public service within this state and Indian
21 country.