



2026 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Commemoration 828

Introduced by: **Senator Foster**

1 **A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION honoring the legacy of Joseph M. Marshall III.**

2 WHEREAS, born on April 8, 1945, on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota,
 3 Joseph M. Marshall III was an enrolled member of the Sicangu Oyate, and was raised by his
 4 maternal grandparents in a traditional Lakota household, in which he learned the Lakota oral
 5 tradition, storytelling, and the lifeways of his people--gifts he would later share with the world
 6 as a teacher, historian, author, craftsman, and public speaker; and

7 WHEREAS, Joseph received the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation Educator of the Year
 8 Award in 2022 for his lifelong leadership in education, first teaching English at Todd County
 9 High School in Mission, South Dakota, and later teaching Native American studies, Lakota
 10 language, and history at various colleges and universities, including Sinte Gleska University,
 11 of which he was a founding board member in 1971; and

12 WHEREAS, in addition to contributing to the arts as a cultural and historical consultant,
 13 technical advisor, actor, and craftsman, Joseph became a prolific and internationally
 14 recognized author, publishing more than twenty books that have informed and inspired
 15 readers across cultures and, as a result, receiving the 2008 PEN/Beyond Margins Award and
 16 the 2023 Owen Wister Award from Western Writers of America, as well as being inducted into
 17 the Western Writers Hall of Fame in 2023; and

18 WHEREAS, on April 18, 2025, Joseph, a sacred voice of the Sicangu Oyate, returned to
 19 the ancestors, and his passing is mourned by individuals and communities in South Dakota
 20 and around the world, even as his contributions, teachings, and stories continue to impart
 21 lessons on character, leadership, perseverance, and spiritual resilience and strengthen the
 22 sovereignty, dignity, and future of Native nations;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the One Hundred First Legislature of the
 24 State of South Dakota, that honor, deepest respect, gratitude, and sympathy are extended
 25 in memory of Joseph M. Marshall III for his extraordinary life, his achievements as an advocate

- 1 and culture bearer, and his enduring legacy as a Lakota leader whose words and works will
- 2 continue to walk beside future generations and bridge understanding between Native and
- 3 non-Native communities.