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# South Dakota Legislature



## Senate Commemoration 831

Introduced by: **Senators** Foster, Duhamel, Perry, Rohl, and Zikmund and **Representatives** Pourier, Aylward, Emery, Moore, Muckey, and Reisch

**A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION recognizing the historical significance of the buffalo and celebrating their return to tribal lands in this state.**

WHEREAS, the buffalo, tatanka, has long been a symbol of strength, resilience, and unity for the Oceti Sakowin and other tribal nations of the Great Plains, providing food, shelter, and spiritual connection to the land for millennia; and

WHEREAS, the near extinction of the buffalo in the nineteenth century was a tragedy that disrupted the way of life of Native communities; and

WHEREAS, the approaching two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United States offers a time to reflect on the nation's shared history and to focus on healing and renewal; and

WHEREAS, the return of the buffalo to tribal lands in this state and across the Great Plains is led by tribal nations, conservation organizations, and community partners working to restore this iconic species to its rightful place on the land; and

WHEREAS, the return of the buffalo to tribal lands also revitalizes cultural and spiritual traditions, strengthens food sovereignty, and empowers Native communities in ways that honor ancestral knowledge and build a sustainable future for all; and

WHEREAS, the return of the buffalo to the plains is an important part of restoring and protecting the natural world for future generations, while also fostering a greater understanding of the diverse histories that define our collective journey;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the One Hundred First Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the return of the buffalo to the Oceti Sakowin and other tribal nations of this region is critically important for cultural renewal, ecological restoration, and providing hope for future generations.

