

AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION supporting the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day in bringing attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage through education.

WHEREAS, The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established International Mother Language Day on November 17, 1999, to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism; and

WHEREAS, The annual International Mother Language Day celebration date, February 21, was chosen to commemorate the day in 1952 in Bangladesh when students died demonstrating for recognition of Bengali as a national language of Pakistan; and

WHEREAS, UNESCO establishes a different theme for the annual celebration of International Mother Language Day each year, promoting various aspects of linguistic education; and

WHEREAS, The year 2025 marked the 25th anniversary of International Mother Language Day, reaffirming the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in fostering dignity, peace, and understanding; and

WHEREAS, According to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, of the over 8,000 existing languages in the world, approximately 1,181 languages are not in use and approximately 6,000 languages are classified as "endangered" with the potential to disappear within a few generations; and

WHEREAS, The United States Census Bureau has identified over 350 languages spoken in the United States, at least 160 of which are distinct Native North American languages; and

WHEREAS, According to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, 280 Native North American languages were spoken in the continental United States when the Europeans arrived and more than 115 are already extinct, with many more critically endangered; and

WHEREAS, The United States enjoys a rich and diverse cultural heritage, and preserving existing languages is an essential piece to preserving this heritage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. This House supports the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day and encourages the people of New Jersey to observe International Mother Language Day with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Director-General of UNESCO and to every member of Congress elected from this State.

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STATEMENT

This resolution supports the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day in bringing attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage through education.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established International Mother Language Day on November 17, 1999, to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism. The annual International Mother Language Day celebration date, February 21, was chosen to commemorate the day in 1952 in Bangladesh when students died demonstrating for recognition of Bengali as a national language of Pakistan.

UNESCO establishes a different theme for the annual celebration of International Mother Language Day each year, promoting various aspects of linguistic education. The year 2025 marked the 25th anniversary of International Mother Language Day, reaffirming the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in fostering dignity, peace, and understanding. According to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, of the over 8,000 existing languages in the world, approximately 1,181 languages are not in use and approximately 6,000 languages are classified as "endangered" with the potential to disappear within a few generations.

The United States Census Bureau has identified over 350 languages spoken in the United States, at least 160 of which are distinct Native North American languages. According to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, 280 Native North American languages were spoken in the continental United States when the Europeans arrived and more than 115 are already extinct, with many more critically endangered. The United States enjoys a rich and diverse cultural heritage, and preserving existing languages is an essential piece to preserving this heritage.

Supports goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day.

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