



**STATEMENT FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' INITIATIVE ON THE
FEBRUARY 11TH MEETING WITH PROMINENT ITALIAN-AMERICAN
ORGANIZATIONS IN ARIZONA**

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 15, 2021

ARIZONA- On February 11th, 2021, the Indigenous Peoples' Initiative held a meeting with several prominent Italian American organizations to discuss Senator Peshlakai's Indigenous Peoples' Day bill and Columbus Day. This meeting marked the first time in 29 years that Native Americans and Italian Americans have met to discuss this issue. While the IPI hoped we could compromise, we understand that it is challenging to solve an almost three-decade barrier in one night.

While the state legislature will no longer move forward with the Indigenous Peoples' Bill (SB1812 and HB2234), we are grateful for all that we have accomplished. In the two years the IPI has worked on this bill, we have gained bipartisan support, tribal support, and the support of many state and national organizations. Although a compromise was not reached, the IPI will be moving forward with a primary focus on federal legislation.

The IPI is actively working with national business and political leaders to bring the Indigenous Peoples' Day bill to fruition. Moreover, IPI members are exploring options with the Biden Administration for the possibility of a proclamation or executive order declaring Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples' Day. In the coming weeks, we will have more information about the national legislation.

If you have further questions, please email the IPI at Indigenousdayaz@gmail.com.