

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 99-4704, by Representatives Kenney, Veloria, Van Luven, Dunn, Ruderman, Linville, Keiser, Stensen, Edwards, Romero, Boldt, Mielke, O'Brien, Santos, Schual-Berke, Ogden, Dickerson, McIntire, Wood, Kagi, Skinner, Hankins, Buck, Ballasiotes and K. Schmidt

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the Washington State Legislature to support economic development throughout our state, which in turn creates jobs for our citizens and elevates the standards of living, especially for those in distressed areas; and

WHEREAS, There are twenty-seven federally recognized Indian tribes located in Washington State, each using their governmental authority and responsibility to encourage economic development within tribal reservations; and

WHEREAS, The Governor and tribal leaders undertook the "Tribal Economic Vitality Initiative" which resulted in the report on the Economic Contributions of Indian Tribes to the Economy of Washington State"; and

WHEREAS, Washington tribes contribute one billion dollars annually to the state's overall economy and in 1997, spent 865 million dollars for supplies, equipment, and services; and

WHEREAS, President Clinton signed a directive in 1998 ordering the development of a strategic plan for coordinating economic development in American Indian communities recognizing its importance due to the fact that many tribes are economically lagging behind main-stream American communities; and

WHEREAS, Economic development has been a long-term goal for the tribes in Washington, because like rural and distressed counties, they suffer from high unemployment and lack of infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, The average annual wages for tribal employment amounted to 18,000 dollars, which is about forty percent lower than the state-wide average of 32,400 dollars; and

WHEREAS, Tribal enterprises currently employ 14,375 Washington citizens full time, including nontribal employees, and infuse moneys into the surrounding regional economies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the cooperative effort of Governor Locke and the Washington tribes in the "Tribal Economic Vitality Initiative" and the report on the "Economic Contributions of Indian Tribes to the Economy of Washington State"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the economic contribution of the Washington tribes and that their tribal enterprises comprise a vital sector of Washington's economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage state agencies to support economic development efforts of Washington tribes.

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