

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2551**

Chapter 35, Laws of 2020

66th Legislature  
2020 Regular Session

GRADUATION CEREMONIES--TRIBAL REGALIA

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 18, 2020

Passed by the House February 12, 2020  
Yeas 95 Nays 1

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of Representatives**

Passed by the Senate March 3, 2020  
Yeas 48 Nays 1

CYRUS HABIB

**President of the Senate**

Approved March 18, 2020 10:38 AM

JAY INSLEE

**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2551** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

**Chief Clerk**

FILED

March 18, 2020

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2551**

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Passed Legislature - 2020 Regular Session

**State of Washington                      66th Legislature                      2020 Regular Session**

**By** House State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Lekanoff, Ramel, Rude, Leavitt, Valdez, Davis, Doglio, Walen, Pollet, Macri, Ormsby, and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/20.

1            AN ACT Relating to permitting students to wear traditional tribal  
2 regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation ceremonies  
3 and related events; adding a new section to chapter 28A.600 RCW;  
4 adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; creating new sections;  
5 and declaring an emergency.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7            NEW SECTION.            **Sec. 1.**            The legislature recognizes that  
8 relationships between sovereign governments are strengthened when  
9 decisions of mutual interest are based in a shared respect of  
10 cultural values. The legislature recognizes also that school  
11 districts, public schools, and institutions of higher education may  
12 use dress codes and other requirements to restrict the wearing of  
13 tribal regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation  
14 ceremonies.

15            Although the restrictions may be premised on promoting  
16 uniformity, they are not appropriate in the context of government-to-  
17 government relationships and do not recognize the distinct and unique  
18 cultural heritage of Native Americans.

19            The legislature, therefore, intends to affirm inherent rights  
20 assured through tribal sovereignty and expressly acknowledge that  
21 students in public schools and institutions of higher education may

1 wear traditional tribal regalia or objects of cultural significance  
2 at graduation ceremonies and related events.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.600  
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) School districts and public schools may not prohibit students  
6 who are members of a federally recognized tribe from wearing  
7 traditional tribal regalia or objects of Native American cultural  
8 significance along with or attached to a gown at graduation  
9 ceremonies or related school events. School districts and public  
10 schools may not require such students to wear a cap if it is  
11 incompatible with the regalia or significant object.

12 (2) School districts and, when necessary, public schools shall  
13 update any relevant policies or procedures in accordance with this  
14 section.

15 (3) For the purposes of this section, "public schools" has the  
16 same meaning as in RCW 28A.150.010.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Sections 2 and 4 of this act apply to the  
18 graduating class of 2020 and subsequent graduating classes.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.10  
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1) Institutions of higher education may not prohibit students  
22 who are members of a federally recognized tribe from wearing  
23 traditional tribal regalia or objects of Native American cultural  
24 significance along with or attached to a gown at graduation  
25 ceremonies or related events. Institutions of higher education may  
26 not require such students to wear a cap if it is incompatible with  
27 the regalia or significant object.

28 (2) Institutions of higher education shall update any relevant  
29 policies or procedures in accordance with this section.

30 (3) For the purposes of this section, "institutions of higher  
31 education" has the same meaning as in RCW 28B.10.016.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act may be known and cited as the  
33 right to tribal regalia act.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
35 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of

1 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
2 effect immediately.

Passed by the House February 12, 2020.

Passed by the Senate March 3, 2020.

Approved by the Governor March 18, 2020.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 18, 2020.

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