

113TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2464

To adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 11, 2014

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “National Bison Legacy  
5       Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds that—

8               (1) bison are considered a historical symbol of  
9       the United States;

1           (2) bison were integrally linked with the eco-  
2       nomic and spiritual lives of many Indian tribes  
3       through trade and sacred ceremonies;

4           (3) there are more than 60 Indian tribes par-  
5       ticipating in the Intertribal Buffalo Council;

6           (4) numerous members of Indian tribes are in-  
7       volved in bison restoration on tribal land;

8           (5) members of Indian tribes have a combined  
9       herd on more than 1,000,000 acres of tribal land;

10          (6) the Intertribal Buffalo Council is a tribal  
11       organization incorporated pursuant to section 17 of  
12       the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the  
13       “Indian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 477);

14          (7) bison can play an important role in improv-  
15       ing the types of grasses found in landscapes to the  
16       benefit of grasslands;

17          (8) a small group of ranchers helped save bison  
18       from extinction in the late 1800s by gathering the  
19       remnants of the decimated herds;

20          (9) bison hold significant economic value for  
21       private producers and rural communities;

22          (10) according to the 2012 Census of Agri-  
23       culture of the Department of Agriculture, as of  
24       2012, 162,110 head of bison were under the stew-  
25       ardship of private producers, creating jobs and pro-

1       viding a sustainable and healthy meat source con-  
2       tributing to the food security of the United States;

3               (11) a bison is portrayed on 2 State flags;

4               (12) the bison has been adopted by 3 States as  
5       the official mammal or animal of those States;

6               (13) a bison has been depicted on the official  
7       seal of the Department of the Interior since 1912;

8               (14) the buffalo nickel played an important role  
9       in modernizing the currency of the United States;

10              (15) several sports teams have the bison as a  
11       mascot, which highlights the iconic significance of  
12       bison in the United States;

13              (16) on December 8, 1905, William Hornaday,  
14       Theodore Roosevelt, and others formed the Amer-  
15       ican Bison Society in response to the near extinction  
16       of bison in the United States;

17              (17) on October 11, 1907, the American Bison  
18       Society sent 15 captive-bred bison from the New  
19       York Zoological Park, now known as the “Bronx  
20       Zoo”, to the first wildlife refuge in the United  
21       States, which was known as the “Wichita Mountains  
22       Wildlife Refuge”, resulting in the first successful re-  
23       introduction of a mammal species on the brink of ex-  
24       tinction back into the natural habitat of the species;

1           (18) in 2005, the American Bison Society was  
2       reestablished, bringing together bison ranchers,  
3       managers from Indian tribes, Federal and State  
4       agencies, conservation organizations, and natural  
5       and social scientists from the United States, Can-  
6       ada, and Mexico to create a vision for the North  
7       American bison in the 21st century;

8           (19) there are bison herds in National Wildlife  
9       Refuges and National Parks;

10          (20) there are bison in State-managed herds  
11       across 11 States;

12          (21) there is a growing effort to celebrate and  
13       officially recognize the historical, cultural, and eco-  
14       nomic significance of the North American bison to  
15       the heritage of the United States;

16          (22) in the 1st session of the 113th Congress,  
17       25 Senators led a successful effort to enact a resolu-  
18       tion to designate November 2, 2013, as the second  
19       annual National Bison Day; and

20          (23) members of Indian tribes, bison producers,  
21       conservationists, sportsmen, educators, and other  
22       public and private partners have participated in the  
23       annual National Bison Day celebration at several  
24       events across the United States and are committed

1 to continuing this tradition annually on the first  
2 Saturday of November.

3 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE NORTH**  
4 **AMERICAN BISON AS THE NATIONAL MAM-**  
5 **MAL.**

6 The mammal commonly known as the “North Amer-  
7 ican bison” is adopted as the national mammal of the  
8 United States.

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