



Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative

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NATIVE AMERICAN SUMMIT – MARCH 12, 2025

Native Leaders to Gather at Illinois Capitol for Third Annual Native American Summit



Native leaders, advocates, and policymakers will come together on March 12, 2025, for the third annual Native American Summit, hosted by the Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative (CAICC) and over 20 Native-led organizations. Held at the Illinois Capitol on the steps of the Rotunda, this summit serves as a vital forum to address legislative and social issues impacting Native communities across the state.

The press conference will begin at 11:00 AM in the Blue Room at the Illinois State Capitol Building in Springfield. We will open the House session with Chairman Joseph "Zeke" Rupnick of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation at 12:00 PM and a Drum, dance, and song at 12:30 PM at the Rotunda. Legislators, their staff, and members of the press are invited to engage in discussions with Native leaders representing over 100,000 Native individuals and more than 150 Tribal Nations in Illinois.

One of the central issues of this year's summit is HB1237, a bill advocating for the elimination of harmful Native mascots in Illinois K-12 schools. The bill aims to foster a more respectful and inclusive educational environment for Native youth. Confirmed speakers include Representative Maurice West, Representative Will Guzzardi, Representative Laura Favor Dias, CAICC representatives, and Chairman Rupnick, with



additional legislative voices expected to join leading up to the event.

The Native American Summit 2025 is more than a gathering—it is a call for action. As Native communities continue to advocate for policy change, this event provides a crucial platform to ensure Indigenous voices are heard and respected in state governance. Lawmakers, community members, and allies are encouraged to attend and take part in these essential conversations.

CAICC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American Indian Association of Illinois
American Indian Center
American Indian Health Services of Chicago
California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc.
Caroline & Ora Smith Foundation
D’Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian & Indigenous Studies – Newberry Library
Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum
Menominee Community Center of Chicago
Native American Chamber of Commerce Illinois
Northwestern University – Native American & Indigenous
Initiatives St. Kateri Center of Chicago
Trickster Cultural Center
Visionary Ventures NFP
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe Chicago Branch Office

OTHER IMPORTANT NATIVE AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Indigenous People’s Day Coalition of Illinois
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Center for Native Futures