

American Indian Religious Freedom Act

PORTION, AS AMENDED

This Act became law on August 11, 1978 (Public Law 95-341, 42 U.S.C. 1996 and 1996a) and has been amended once. The description of the Act, as amended, tracks the language of the United States Code except that (following common usage) we refer to the "Act" (meaning the Act, as amended) rather than to the "subchapter" or the "title" of the Code.

42 U.S.C. 1996,
Protection and preservation of traditional religions of Native Americans

Section 1

On and after August 11, 1978, it shall be the policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiians, including but not limited to access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites.

42 U.S.C. 1996 note,
Federal implementation of protective and preservation functions relating to Native American religious cultural rights and practices; Presidential report to Congress

Section 2

The President shall direct the various Federal departments, agencies, and other instrumentalities responsible for administering relevant laws to evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with native traditional religious leaders in order to determine appropriate changes necessary to protect and preserve Native American religious cultural rights and practices. Twelve months after August 11, 1978, the President shall report back to Congress the results of his evaluation, including any changes* which were made in administrative policies and procedures, and any recommendations he may have for legislative action.

*One of the changes in administrative policy and procedure was Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites.