

Journal #6012 from sdc 6.25.25

June 25, 1876

A remarkable archive assembled by a missionary to the Santee Dakota, 1860-1919

Letter Discovered from Black Soldier of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment Contains Shocking Request

Remarks from one concerned about war on public lands

New law will make it esier to vote on reservations in Nevada

The Data Center Boom in the Desert



“Only the Earth lasts forever” Crazy Horses's war cry . ~ Richard Sunka Nunpa (Oglala Lakota)



Pehin Haska Kasota Pi-On this day on June 25th, 1876 Crazy Horse and Knife Chief defeated General George Custer on the Peji Sla Wakpa(Greasy Grass River) in a tactical military defeat. Crazy Horse made a Suicide run which broke the opposing forces in two, which led to the defeat. Crazy Horse is credited for 38 kills against the enemy.

Maka ki ecela tehanl yanke Buffalo Calf Road Woman, or Brave Woman, (1844 – 1879) was a Northern Cheyenne woman who saved her wounded warrior brother, Chief Comes in Sight, in the Battle of the Rosebud (as it was named by the United States) in 1876. Her rescue helped rally the Cheyenne warriors to win the battle. She fought next to her husband in the Battle of the Little Bighorn that same year. In 2005 Northern Cheyenne storytellers broke more than 100 years of silence about the battle, and they credited Buffalo Calf Road Woman with striking the blow that knocked Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer off his horse before he died.
<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1335893704253567>

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*This collection is for sale through Boston Rare Books. I am not posting it as an ad, but as an article that has so many clues for archival research. sdc*

### **A remarkable archive assembled by a missionary to the Santee Dakota, 1860-1919**

John P. Williamson, Stephen R. Riggs, Artemas Ehnamani, et al., [Voluminous archive including *Session Records of the United Churches of Pajutaze and Hazlewood* and other manuscripts relating to John Williamson's missionary work among the Santee Dakota, 1860–1869; a *U.S. Indian Service Medical Record Book* for the Santee Agency, 1876–1892; typescript testimonies of two Santee men, 1918; and a gathering of original photos from 1919.] Minnesota, South Dakota, and Nebraska, 1854–1919.

On Hold

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*An archive of manuscript and photographic materials covering a period of particularly violent upheaval and assimilation for the Santee Dakota, primarily relating to the work of Presbyterian missionary John P. Williamson before and after the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, including their incarceration at Fort Snelling, expulsion from Minnesota, and the ensuing years at the Crow Creek Reservation and then the Santee Agency in Nebraska.*

*The archive includes two particularly rare and remarkable items: “Session Records of the United Churches of Pajutaze and Hazlewood” for the years 1854-1871, maintained by Williamson; and a “U.S. Indian Service. Medical Record Book” for the Santee Agency, covering the years 1877-1892. I find no record of anything similar having appeared on the antiquarian market, while OCLC lists a single “Medical Record Book” (for the Red Lake Indian Reservation, 1876-1891, OCLC #313866831) connected with the Indian Agency system, and only one collection of Native American church records, in the “United Church of Christ, Northern Plains Conference records, 1872-2014” held at the North Dakota Historical Society (OCLC #74740557).*

### **John Poage Williamson**

Williamson (1835–1917) was born at Lac qui Parle in present-day Minnesota to Rev. Thomas Smith Williamson, M.D. and his wife Margaret Poage. The elder Williamson was the first ordained missionary stationed by the American Board of Foreign Missions among the Dakota.

John grew up bilingual, and after his graduation from Marietta College in 1857, Lane Seminary in 1860, and a brief stint as a pastor in Indiana, he returned to Minnesota to begin his life's work among the Santee Dakota at the Lower Sioux Agency.

It was to be a tumultuous time. Strained by the Civil War, the U.S. government ceased to provide the rations due to the Dakota by several treaties. Combined with an influx of white settlers, this failure left the Dakota in starvation conditions, which in turn prompted several raids in late August and early September, 1862, resulting in the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. Federal forces defeated the Dakota at the Battle of Wood Lake, and following their surrender they were imprisoned to await trial. Williamson preached to prisoners of war held at Mankato Prison, and President Lincoln, though commuting most of the more than 300 death sentences, authorized what nevertheless remains the largest execution in American history: 38 Dakota men were hanged there on December 26th, 1862.

Following the war, thousands of Dakota women and children were imprisoned at several sites, including Fort Snelling in St. Paul, Minnesota, where Williamson and his colleague Rev. Stephen R. Riggs preached and conducted church meetings. When it was made illegal for Dakota to live in Minnesota and a bounty was placed on Dakota scalps, Williamson accompanied them to the Crow Creek Indian Reservation, on the east bank of the Missouri in the Dakota Territory (now central South Dakota). In 1866, however, Santee inhabitants of the reservation were again expelled, and Williamson traveled with them to the newly-established Santee Agency in north-central Nebraska.

Williamson published numerous books in the Dakota language, as well as an English-Dakota dictionary (1886), and in 1871 established an important and long-running Dakota (and later Dakota and English) newspaper, [Iapi Oaye](#) (The Word Carrier). In this he collaborated with Alfred Longley Riggs (1837–1916, son of Stephen R. Riggs, with whom both Williamson and his father worked). The younger Riggs founded the Santee Normal Training School in 1870 and eventually took over the editorship of the paper. Artemas Ehnamani (ca. 1826–1902), the second Dakota pastor to be ordained by the Presbyterian Church, worked closely with Riggs and Williamson, and his name appears regularly in Williamson's records.

In 1869 Williamson transitioned to the Yankton Agency—some thirty miles north of the Santee Agency, in what would become South Dakota—where he ministered to the Yankton at his home in Greenwood until his death in 1917. In 1883 he was named Superintendent of Presbyterian missions among the Sioux. In this capacity “He has visited practically all of the Sioux agencies. He was the first missionary of any denomination among the Indians of South Dakota and he helped to organize nineteen congregations and erect 23 churches.” (“Legacy John P. Williamson”)

The materials offered here were likely preserved by Williamson's daughter Winifred, who, with her husband Jesse Grant Barton, came to live at Santee in 1915 (two years before Williamson's death) and remained at least until the death of her husband in 1943.<sup>[1]</sup> Williamson maintained close ties with the Santee Agency following his move to Yankton, exchanging frequent visits with A. L. Riggs. These bonds evidently remained strong in the next generation, as materials from the Santee Normal Training School were later given to Yankton College by Riggs's son Frederick (who, like Williamson and his father, later edited *Iapi Oaye*).

## **Inventory of the archive**

The archive consists of roughly four groups of material: records of church activity from Williamson's early career in the 1860s; a substantial volume of medical records from the Santee Agency, 1877-1892; affidavits made in 1918 at Santee, Nebraska by Star Frazier and Napoleon Wabashaw providing their personal histories and outlines of council decisions and treaty agreements since the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie; and a group of 27 original photographs, most of which show Dakota in Santee, Nebraska in 1919 and include numerous candid scenes from one or more mission meetings.

### **Records of church activity from Williamson's early career**

1. S. R. Riggs and J. P. Williamson. Session Records of the United Churches of Pajutaze and Hazlewood. 8vo (7.625" x 5.5"), blind-stamped brown leather over boards, gilt title in one of five compartments at spine. 203 pp. manuscript in ink. Hazlewood, March 3, 1854–April 17, 1862; Indian Camp F[or]t Snelling, January 31, 1863–July 4, 1863; New Indian Reserve, Upper Missouri River, July 5–December 5, 1863; Fort Thompson, December 6, 1863–January 25, 1866; Crow Creek Agency, March 3–July 24, 1866; Niobrara, Nebraska, July 24–August 5, 1866; Bazile Creek, Nebraska, December 13, 1866–August 5, 1867; Breckinridge Nebraska, October 29, 1867–January 8, 1871, with single entries from River Bend (October 3, 1869) and Big Sioux Point (October 10, 1869). Good or better condition, with head and foot of spine chipped and a 2" tear at head; contents very good, ink on many pages faint but legible with effort.

The first 26 pages in this volume were transcribed by Williamson in November of 1859 from the records of missionary and linguist Stephen Return Riggs (1812–1883). The first of these entries, dated March 3, 1854, notes that "The Records of the Lacquiparle Church were consumed in the burning of the mission houses." Subsequent entries record marriages, baptisms, examinations for admission to the Church, roll calls, and so on. Williamson's own records begin on January 26, 1860—the year he began his missionary work at the Lower Sioux Agency—and list the names of those who "appeared before the session" to request admission to the Church or confess to sins, as well as those who were suspended. Marriages and baptisms are also recorded (the latter occasionally with later pencil annotations indicating the year of the child's death).

Between January and July, 1863, Williamson records "sessions" at the "Indian Camp" at Fort Snelling. Minutes often note the location of Church meetings, which, unsurprisingly, seem to have been somewhat improvisational; for instance, on March 8, 1863 the group "Met in the morning in the upper story of the ware-house," while the "Session met at Maza's tent" on March 4, 1863—just a few days after her reinstatement to the Church roles. (On March 1 she had "acknowledged during her absence from Church privileges to have wandered from the path of duty but professed penitence, and her name was replaced on the Church roll.")

18 pages of the volume are devoted to "Church Rolls" for the years 1864 through 1869, many with notations apparently updating their status.

**2. [Manuscript record of men in the Mankato Prison "who had more than one wife" and who "came forward and selected one—forsaking the other.]"** Mankato Prison, March 17, 1863. 7 ¾" x 5", 2 pp. in ink. Excellent condition.

**3. J. P. Williamson, "Partial List of Baptisms in Pilgrim Church."** 1863–1870. 5pp manuscript in ink, 9 ¾" x 7 ¾". Good condition, with wear at edges and separations along old folds.

**4. [Certificate of membership in the Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis.]** Minneapolis, October 22, 1868. 8 3/8" x 5 ¼", 1 p., accomplished in ink for Miss Julia Ann La Framboise.

**5. "Church Roll [:] Pilgrim Church. August 1, 1871".** 16 pp. manuscript in ink on lined paper, 12 ¼" x 4", with additional page in pencil, 12 ½" x 8". The Pilgrim Church was established in 1870 on the Santee Reservation. The document lists some 270 Dakota names, with frequent annotations, often indicating kinship (e.g., "mother in law of Rob. Phil."), death dates, alternate (English or Dakota) names, etc. Good condition, with minor toning and soiling and some separations along old folds.

**6. J. P. Williamson, [Manuscript in Dakota, mentioning A. L. Riggs—possibly announcing his new leadership role in the church.]** [No place, no date]. 2 pp. in ink on single leaf, 7 7/8" x 5". Signed by Williamson. Very good condition.

**7. Artemas Ehnamani, [Manuscript letter in Dakota to the Santee Agency.]** Beloit, Wisconsin, November 8, 1882. 4 pp. manuscript in ink, 8" x 5". Ehnamani was ordained as pastor as early as 1867. Toned, with minor chipping at edges, good condition.

**8. [Manuscript list of some 230 Dakota names.]** 4 pp. onionskin in ink. [No place, no date]. Good condition, separated along central horizontal folds.

**9. [List of 21 English and Dakota names.]** [No place, no date]. Single page in pencil, 7.75" x 5". Each name followed by "ho," "yes," or "han," and including "Ehnamani," "A. L. Riggs" and "Mrs. Riggs." Very good condition, with old vertical fold at center, wear and some chipping to upper and lower edges.

**10. [List of 24 English and Dakota names.]** [No place, no date]. Pencil on a single sheet of lined paper, 12 ½" x 8". About very good condition, with some toning and chipping.

**11. Chief Sp[o]tted Tail. "In the Council House of the Great Sioux Tribe."** [No place, no date]. 1 p. typed on onionskin, 10 ¼" x 8". Later transcription of a speech delivered in the late 1860s at "the great council on the Powder River, just before the attack on Fort Phil Kearny" (See Charles Eastman, *Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1921, pp. 35–36). Very good condition.

### **Volume of medical records from the Santee Agency**

**12. [Cover title:] U.S. Indian Service. Medical Record Book.** [Santee Agency], 1877–1892. Folio (13 ¾" x 8 ¾"), three quarters brown calf, dark brown cloth over boards, printed paper title piece at covers. 350pp, of which 243 have manuscript entries, mostly in ink. Tipped to front pastedown: Broadside 1874 Indian Office "Memorandum" on "Nomenclature to be followed in making Monthly Sanitary Reports", giving a list of diseases broken into five classes. Tipped to rear pastedown: Broadside 1876 "Instructions Relating to Medical Supplies," signed in type by J.

Q. Smith, Commissioner of the Department of the Interior. Several leaves manuscript in ink, evidently listing Dakota names, laid in. Good condition, with minor-moderate soiling and staining to some leaves, the broadsides rather worn, binding bumped and rubbed.

This volume offers a window into the array of health problems faced by the Dakota in the decades of rapid assimilation enforced by law, church, and school that followed their expulsion from their ancestral homelands in the early 1860s. Records are organized according to the five category of illness listed on the "Memorandum" on the front pastedown ("Zymotic", "Constitutional", "Parasitic", "Local", and "Violent Diseases and Deaths"), with counts of male and female patients "taken sick" each month. For most of the volume this notation includes additional columns for patients' ages and names (though entries also refer to patients by relation, e.g., "Star Fraziers Boy," or association, e.g., "Boy at Miss [Sarah L.] Vo[o]rhees school"); whether they are "Indian," "Half Breed" or "White"; and whether they "Recovered" or "Died." The final category—"Violent Diseases"—embraces injuries such as puncture- and "incised wounds," frostbite, poison ivy, and fractures, while entries in the other categories record cases of Brights Disease, Erysipelas, and meningitis; dysentery, constipation, and fever (typhoid and "intermittent"); "constitutional syphilis" and gonorrhea; chronic and acute rheumatism; "lumbricoid worms" (human roundworms); and waves of colic, conjunctivitis, and mumps, among other illnesses. Among the various cases of mumps in 1885, for example, are several at the Santee Normal school, identified simply as "Rigg school," as well as cases in the "Birds Nest" (a girls dormitory there), and afflicting its founder, A. L. Riggs. The register also records births and deaths from 1880 to 1891, and one of the free endpapers records the "Number of Santees" at each census from 1877 to 1904. *The printed broadsides on the pastedowns are not recorded in OCLC.*

#### **Affidavits made in 1918 at Santee, Nebraska**

**13. Statement of STAR FRAZIER. Santee, Nebraska, 11 July 1918.** Affidavit, 2 pp. typed (carbon copy), 10" x 8". Sealed, signed by the Notary Public, Star Frazier (1848-?), and interpreter G[eorge]. J. Frazier (1876-1964), son of Rev. Francis Frazier and grandson of Rev. Artemus Ehnamani. Very good condition.

"My name is Star Frazier, and I am 69 years old. I am a full blood member of the S[a]ntee Sioux Tribe. I have lived on the Santee reservation ever since it was established, which is now about fifty years. Before that I lived in Minnesota but before coming to Santee, the government moved us to Crow Creek where I lived about three years...Chief Spotted tail told Wabashaw that the Government had asked the Indians west of the Missouri River to sell the Black Hills...the Commissioners came to this agency. I was a policeman at the time. They sent for the six chiefs and their head men, twelve in all to meet them at the agency. When we met the commissioners, they told us that all the upper Indians had signed the treaty for the sale of the Black Hills. They showed us the paper and said we were the last to sign and that we were to share equally with the other Indians in the proceeds of the sale. They asked us to sign the paper but did not explain just what was in it or read it to us..."

**14. Statement of Napoleon Wabashaw. Santee Nebraska, 11 July 1918.** Affidavit, 2 pp. typed, 10" x 8". Sealed, signed by the Notary Public, Napoleon Wabashaw, and interpreter G[eorge]. J. Frazier. [With] two signed carbon copies of the affidavit, 4 additional pp. Very good condition.



“My name is Napoleon Wabashaw. I am 65 years old and am a full blood member of the Santee Sioux tribe of Indians...In 1876 there was a council held here at the Santee Agency[.] At that council the chief topic was the sale of the Black Hills. The Commissioners told at that council that the Black Hills had been sold by the Upper Indians and that all of those Indians had signed the treaty and that we were the last tribe to sign. Before th[e] Santees were asked to sign the treaty, the Commissioners read from the paper that in the following June the Government was to make the first payment. The Commissioners then said that they had no authority to recommend for or against the removal of the Santee Indians to the Indian Territory. The Commissioners also said that the treaty of 1868 was to be still in force, with exception of Article 11, which provided for a certain tract of territory in which the Indians were to be permitted to hunt...My father was one of the signers of the treaty of 1868, and by one of the articles of that treaty each head of family was to receive 320 acres of land and those not heads of families were to each receive 160 acres and children born after that were to receive 80 acres...”

### **Photographs**

**15. E[lla] Jane Hardcastle, et al., photographers. [28 original photos.] Santee, Nebraska, 1919 and 1938.** Most 8” x 10”, including 1 duplicate. Many with typed onionskin captions or inscriptions in pencil or ink, as well as Y.W.C.A. stamps on numerous versos. Very good condition, some wear at edges, excellent tonality.

Winifred Barton remarks in her biography of her father, published just two years after his death, that “The opening years of the twentieth century have ushered in a new era in the history of the Dakota people. The change has been so marked that it seems to have taken place over night... The young people have taken the standards of civilization as their standards, and do not wish to be known as Indians, but as Americans” (p. 189). Whether or not Barton is fully correct, these photos are evidence of a great extent of assimilation and christianization among the Dakota by 1919. Most photos document the missionary conference at Santee, Nebraska in 1919: crowds of Dakota in western clothing seated in and around a large pavillion tent at “feast day”; a young girl —perhaps eight years old—with long braids, holding her white bonnet “at mission meeting”; men, women and children in and around rows of tents and tipis in the “mission meeting camp”; three elderly men, seated in the grass against the side of a building, passing a pipe; two young girls playing on a swing, and three girls with short bobs spinning on an old carriage wheel; an elderly woman seated in front of a tent (“[Jesse Wakeman's](#) grandmother”); a woman setting up a tipi; a “memorial service at Santee”; an elderly woman and her baby grandchild; and more. One group photo—showing some 17 women and young girls—has a later annotation on the verso providing their names. Another photo, captioned simply “Sioux – Nebraska” shows a group of women (two apparently white, and one holding a baby) gathered around a table with books, papers, and an American flag, apparently reading and transcribing letters for two older women standing by. The latest photo in the group, and the only one apparently not taken in 1919, shows the “Indian Congress at Pine Ridge S. Dak—July 1, 1938” and is stamped on the verso by the Purdy Studio in Gordon, Nebraska.

Many photos bear the stamp of “E. Jane Hardcastle [:] Y.W.C.A. Photography Service”. According to one 1921 article, Hardcastle (1878-1954) was “a pioneer in the work of taking pictures of her subjects as they are normally, not like the photographs of children we generally find in family albums.” The article quotes Hardcastle on her work for the Y.W.C.A.: “I have gone

to Indian missionary conferences and done nothing for days but make friends with the Indians that they might become natural when in my presence. In the beginning they objected to having their pictures taken, believing that when they were photographed something vital was taken from them, but always before I left a conference I was able to walk in and bout among them, and click, click, click, without one of them turning their head.” (*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Jan. 9, 1921, p. 14)

*In all, a revealing archive of materials compiled by a life-long missionary and spanning over half a century of rapid change for the Dakota people.*

### **References and provenance**

Winifred Barton, [\*John P. Williamson: A Brother to the Sioux\*](#) (Clements, MN: Sunnycrest, 1980). [“Legacy John P. Williamson”](#), on line at *South Dakota Hall of Fame*.

[1] This supposition based on inclusion of photographs taken at Santee in 1919, where Winifred lived from 1915 on.

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“The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.” — Jonas Salk
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### **Amazing Letter Discovered from a Black Soldier of the First Rhode Island Regiment— Containing a Shocking Request**

Extract: The First Rhode Island Regiment was re-established in February 1778 in order to entice enslaved men to join its ranks. The idea likely originated from white officers of the regiment, whose ranks had been decimated from difficult military campaigns around New York City and Philadelphia. The idea also had the implicit support of General George Washington, who had forwarded the request to re-establish the regiment with enslaved men to Rhode Island’s governor.

On February 9, 1778, meeting at the East Greenwich courthouse, Rhode Island’s General Assembly enacted a law providing freedom to enslaved men who enlisted in the regiment. But there were a few important conditions. First, the enslaved man had to enlist for the duration of the war. Second, the enlistee’s former master or mistress was to be paid by the state an amount equal to the fair market value of the enslaved man, as determined by the state. In addition, the statute’s structure indicates that both the enslaved man and his owners had to agree to the enlistment.[4]

As it turned out, there were not enough enslaved young men in Rhode Island willing to enlist to fill a regiment. About ninety enslaved men did enlist, thus gaining their freedom. But more men were needed. Free Black men, Narragansett Indians, and other men of color filled out the ranks of privates. The officers were all white men, including the regiment’s colonel, Christopher Greene of Warwick.

<https://smallstatebighistory.com/amazing-letter-discovered-from-a-black-soldier-of-the-first-rhode-island-regiment-containing-a-shocking-request/>



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And if you are interested in the Narragansett or Wampanoag, read these:

<https://smallstatebighistory.com/top-ten-turning-points-rhode-islands-history/>

<https://smallstatebighistory.com/a-mystery-at-canonchet-who-built-the-stone-piles-in-hopkinton-and-why/>

~~~~~  
Zach J.

Note #1

Advocating to get this disgusting idea wiped off the face of this planet. This is Sen. Mike Lee's (R-UT) part of the "Big Beautiful Bill", which mandates the sale of 3 million acres of public land and puts over 120 million more up for bid. What does this mean? As an American, you lose access to lands to hike, fish, camp, hunt, teach your kids the rule of the land. What do we gain? Nothing. This land will be removed from our access and given to private, often overseas businesses. Give our senators a call and tell your family from different states to call a senator too. Public lands belong in public hands

Note#2 When one conservation win occurs, another threat immediately emerges. Today, the Senate Parliamentarian has blocked spineless politician Senator Mike Lee's (R-UT) land sale in the budget bill. This is a minor victory in a small war. Mike Lee will either have to receive 60 votes (extremely unlikely), or he will propose an altered amendment to the budget bill, with legal loopholes likely. We must keep calling to ensure NO land sale occurs and we have momentum, all 4 senators from Montana and Idaho are now opposing the sale. However, a new, larger threat has emerged. The USDA is proposing rescinding the "Roadless Area Conservation Rule", which protects 59 million acres. These areas have some of the last remaining untouched areas in the country. Unfortunately, no congressional approval is needed, this is all in the hands of Brooke Rollins, who has heavy ties to oil and big agriculture. The only way to stop this is by lawsuits or by new congressional law. This will be another massive fight, I will post a script for senators sometime in the near future. While I think these people deserve Tar and feathers, we can start with calls. Don't give them an inch because they'll take a mile!

#3Zach J. Rancho Ramon

Since our senators are very likely to vote no on the public land sale, I figured I'd write something that we can use to call senators around the nation. I am using this to call all 98 senators outside of my home state. We are making progress, Idaho senators have publically announced they will not support this land sale. Don't give them an inch. Our beautiful lands belong in our hands.

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PS Yesterdays's Journal should have been labled #6011; never known for my typing, it has been a little more than hectic around here these days. sdc

New law will make it easier to vote on reservations in Nevada

AP

Nevada polling station.

Tribes will soon be able to run their own polling locations for federal and state elections on reservations in Nevada. The change came from Gov. Joe Lombardo's approval of Senate Bill 421 in the recently concluded legislative session.

This bill was developed in response to barriers Tribal members in the state faced when trying to participate in elections.

For instance, members of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, one of the two largest tribes in the state by population, had to travel over 60 miles to cast a ballot.

"When someone has to drive two to four hours to vote, that's not Democracy," said Nevada's Secretary of State, Cisco Aguilar.

And Indigenous voters are still dealing with voter intimidation in rural areas of the state.

"Historically, rural communities in Nevada have been very racist. It has definitely been easier today than it was in previous years, but I experienced racism at a very young age," said former Walker River Paiute Tribe chairperson and consultant, Andrea Martinez. "And so, it's not too far gone that racism is still an issue in Nevada."

Although tribes are sovereign nations, tribal members were given U.S. citizenship in 1924. Martinez says this dual status makes voting important.

"We have just become citizens only 100 years ago, and I don't know if people realize that," Martinez said. "And these decisions that are made on federal levels impact our tribal nations immensely."

A recent example of this impact is President Donald Trump's administration cutting 400 federal grants for tribes. Walker River Paiute Tribe was one of many affected by the cuts, losing \$20 million needed to fix their antiquated water system.

Many tribal members in Nevada don't prioritize voting in federal and state elections. But Martinez sees an increased number of tribal members who want to participate in them.

"If tribal voices aren't heard at this level, then we're not participating in forming our budget or the laws that are going to be implemented in our country when the federal government has trust responsibilities to the tribe," she said. "And so it's important that we have that right just as well as everybody else in the country because it affects us just as much."

Before SB 421, the state required local counties to provide polling locations to tribes that wished to participate. A law that passed in 2023 added more polling locations throughout the state. The change doubled voter turnout in tribal land, raising it to 36 percent. But it wasn't perfect according to Martinez.

"The stories that I've heard from other tribes [is], they don't even get a call back. They don't have any communication with the counties or anybody who works for them," Martinez said. "That's really unfortunate, because they should have the same respect as everybody else in our country who has the right to vote."

Aguilar says he feels increasing tribal participation benefits everyone.

“We should be proud of that 36 percent increase, but when you step back and think about it, it’s actually not something we should be proud of,” he said. “It was the fact we had been missing so many voters for so many elections that they didn’t have a voice in who we are as Nevadans.”

The Secretary of State's office supported Senate Bill 421 throughout the legislative session.

It goes into law in October.

<https://www.knpr.org/politics/2025-06-17/new-law-will-make-it-easier-to-vote-on-reservations-in-nevada>

Ed note: in contrast Gov Lombardo vetoed 87 bills. And there is no super-majority to override.

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<https://innovia-labs.ai> › *the-data-center-boom-in-the-desert*

[The data center boom in the desert - Innovia Labs](https://innovia-labs.ai)

May 24, 2025**The AI race is transforming northwestern Nevada into one of the world's largest data-center markets—and sparking fears of water strains in the nation's driest state.**

<https://waterpolitics.com> › *the-data-center-boom-in-the-desert*

[The Data Center Boom In The Desert - Water Politics](https://waterpolitics.com)

May 20, 2025**The Data Center Boom In The Desert** May 20th, 2025 . Via MIT Technology Review, a look at how the AI race is transforming northwestern Nevada into one of the world's largest **data-center** markets—and sparking fears of water strains in the nation's driest state:

<https://www.technologyreview.com> › 2025 › 05 › 22 › 1117300 › *the-download-the-desert-data-center-boom-and-how-to-measure-earths-elevations*

[The Download: The desert data center boom, and how to measure Earth's ...](https://www.technologyreview.com)

May 22, 2025**The data center boom in the desert** In the high desert east of Reno, Nevada, construction crews are flattening the golden foothills of the Virginia Range, laying the foundations of a **data center** city.

