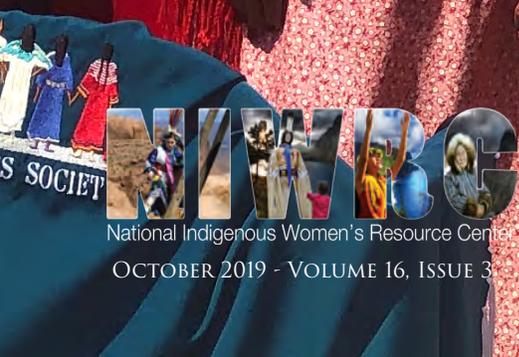


Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN



Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN

Dear Friends,

The *Restoration* magazine was created nearly two decades ago as a communication vehicle for the movement to advance a national agenda to increase the safety of Native women. Once again, the October *Restoration* provides an update designed for action. 2019 is a pivotal legislative year! Two landmark federal acts have expired, and numerous tribal bills introduced in the last nine months are still under consideration.

The NCAI Task Force has worked to ensure reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA), and the passage of other pending legislation. These bills will provide resources and increased protections for Native women and all tribal victims. The pending VAWA and FVPSA reauthorization bills will, if enacted, make historic amendments to federal Indian law needed to remove outstanding barriers to the safety of Native women.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted April 4, 2019, in support of the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act 2019 (H.R. 1585). On July 24, 2019, Senators Casey and Murkowski introduced the reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (S. 2259). Many of the other proposed tribal legislation are also included under VAWA (H.R. 1585). These tribal enhancements will ensure that Indian tribes have the authority and resources to create the changes needed to increase safety for Native women and all victims.

Across the United States, Indian tribes—elected leaders, advocates, survivors, tribal coalitions—are engaged at the local, regional, and national levels to inform Congress of the crisis of violence confronting Native women. Social justice actions honoring missing and murdered Native women and girls continue to grow. Tribal leaders stressed the urgent need for Congressional action at the 2019 Violence Against Women Annual Consultation. This need was also stated by speakers during the 25th anniversary celebration of VAWA on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building. Many of these events are shared in this *Restoration*. It is an exciting time of change!

The 2019 tribal legislative agenda is the focus of our October *Restoration*. We hope you find it helpful in your efforts and encourage you to share it widely.

Reauthorize VAWA and FVPSA for All!



Ahéhee'

Lucy Simpson
Executive Director
NIWRC



Mvto!

Cherrah Giles
Board Chair
NIWRC



Cover: September 13, 2019, Twenty-Five Years of the Violence Against Women Act. "We know that VAWA helps keep Native women safe," said Representative Deb Haaland (D-NM) a citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna, pictured at the podium. "But the law does not protect Native women from trafficking or sexual assaults, for example, and it doesn't cover crimes against children and tribal law enforcement. It does not address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women or Native women living in urban areas either." The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and the National Congress of American Indians organized the event to honor the passage of the Act twenty-five years ago. Representative Tom Cole spoke during the celebration of the importance of reauthorizing the VAWA in 2019. Congresswomen Gwenn Moore (D-W) and Betty McCollum (D-MN), tribal leaders, grassroots tribal coalitions, and many others joined the event. Photograph courtesy of Indianz.com.

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The National Tillie Black Bear Women Are Sacred Day, October 1st

"At night, as young children, we kept watch for government agents so we could warn our families doing a sweat, purification. It was a crime to speak our language, practice our ceremonies, and be who we are as Indian people."--Tillie Black Bear

The struggle to end violence against Native women runs parallel to the colonization of hundreds of tribal nations in the United States. While all suffered the inhuman brutality of federal law and policies, each nation has a specific history of how colonization altered the lives and safety of women. The first poster created with funding under the VAWA in 1995 read "If the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being of the woman is intact so too is that of the family, community, and society."

Tillie Black Bear was the first Native woman to emerge at the national level in 1978 to advocate for battered Indian women and continued to do so until her passage in 2014. The NIWRC honors Tillie as one of our founding mothers and as a grandmother of the battered women's movement. Tillie provided leadership for more than four decades and at key moments of our struggle for safety and sovereignty.

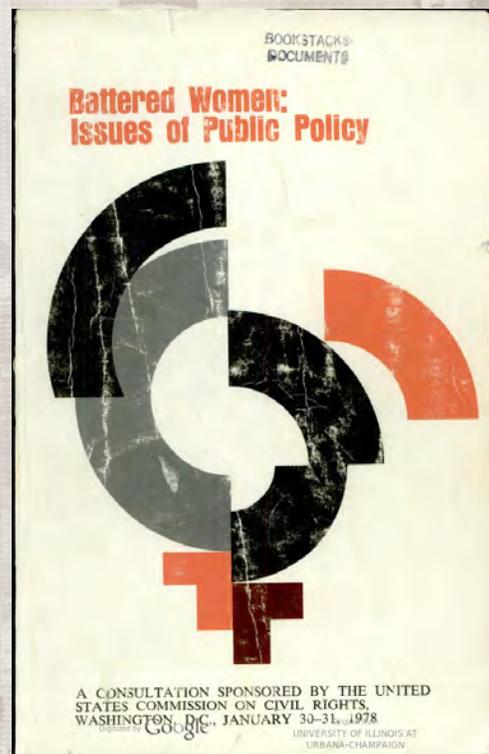
Tillie was well known for saying, "At any moment and any place we must

"Even in thought, women are to be respected. We teach this to our children. We teach it to our grandchildren. We teach it to our kids so that the generations to come will know what is expected of them. Those generations to come will also know how to treat each other as relatives."
-Tillie Black Bear, September 7, 2006, Rosebud Indian Reservation

"As a Native American, I would like to make you aware of the fact that the problem of battered women ... also happens with Native American women and women in rural America. I am of rural America, from South Dakota. But I am also from an Indian reservation. I am also a battered woman—I have gotten out of the situation about a year ago. When I got in the situation, I already had a masters, I was working, and I never thought that I would be in this situation, but I was. It was hard for me to get out of it on the reservation. The conditions on the reservation are such that there is no immediate facilities or support groups that exist."—Tillie Black Bear, Statement, Battered Women: Issues of Public Policy, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, January 30, 1978, Washington, D.C.

be prepared to stand for Native women." She understood the safety of Native women at its roots is linked to the laws, policies, and cultural genocide of colonization. The United States Congress apologized for this long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the federal government and is making significant changes through VAWA, FVPSA, VOCA and other federal laws.

A large part of the legacy of colonization is cultural genocide. For our movement, it is reflected in the destruction of the images of the leadership roles of Native women. The lack of public acknowledgment of the heroines that defended their nations. The grandmothers who stood against the criminalization of those ways of being a Native woman.



In understanding the deep roots of violence against Native women, the NIWRC encourages our movement to honor our leaders and celebrate their lives. By creating national holidays reflective of our reality as Indigenous women, we begin to challenge the cultural tolerance for violence against Native women. "Tillie's understanding of social change, organizing, movement building, and making relatives are her living legacy. Tillie inspired millions of other Americans from all walks of life to end domestic and sexual violence. We celebrate Tillie's life and our movement with a national day to honor her life's work."—Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC.





"There has to be a piece about reclaiming traditional ways of healing, not only consequences for perpetrators but traditional ways of healing for the for victims. For the victim, there is a part of her that has been taken. How do we help her reclaim that part that has been taken? What do we need to do as tribal women to do that? There have been many times where we have taken women into the purification lodge ... and it basically lays a foundation for the women for healing. And that is where it is really important for women who believe in traditional spirituality, they are reclaimed by that. We pray with the women to help her reclaim parts of her body. We wipe her tears. We wipe her down with the sage to cleanse her that way. Often times, victims want some type of healing ... they want something to help them stop the pain they are experiencing. The feeling of fear not only for themselves but for family members. To help them put a closure to that. And women do not just come once, but they keep coming back for additional purification lodge ceremonies. It becomes a foundation and framework for how they take care of themselves in other situations ... other periods of their lives. It is about having a belief in something greater. After working here at Rosebud for over 25 years, we have to do something that is hands-on, tangible, that will give them the strength to know they are not alone."—Tillie Black Bear, September 2006, Saint Francis, Rosebud Indian Reservation

Tillie's leadership included creating and amending federal legislation to increase safety for Native women through strengthening tribal sovereignty. Tillie's efforts included the Violence Against Women Act, the Family Violence Protection and Services Act, and the Tribal Law and Order Act. Tillie led a Wiping of the Tears Ceremony at the Senate Hart building to pave the way for passage of the Safety for Indian Women Title of VAWA 2005. Tillie understood the importance of building organizational capacity and the political role of the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women. Pictured Tillie Black Bear and Juana Majel Dixon, NCAI Task Force meeting, January 27, 2010, Washington, D.C.



Sign On

to support October 1st as
Tillie Black Bear Women Are Sacred Day!
<http://bit.ly/TillieSignOn>



October 1st
Tillie Black Bear Women Are Sacred Day

Save-the-Date!

*Carrying Our Medicine
and Strengthening Our Vision
to End the Violence*



NIWRC is pleased to announce that we will be hosting the WAS Conference at the beautiful INTERCONTINENTAL SAINT PAUL RIVERFRONT. Mark your calendars and watch our website for details, including registration and agenda.



The WAS Conference is one of the oldest and largest gatherings of advocates, survivors, tribal domestic and sexual violence programs, tribal community members, tribal leadership, law enforcement and tribal court personnel dedicated to ending violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and children. WAS offers state of the art training opportunities designed to increase the capacity of tribal nations, tribal domestic violence and community-based programs to address violence in tribal communities. Conference presenters include emerging Indigenous leaders and experts in the movement to ending violence.



Support the NativeLove Project: Buy a NativeLove T-Shirt!

The NativeLove Project works to end violence against Native youth by empowering them to redefine NativeLove. Since 2013, the NativeLove project has worked with Native youth to think about what NativeLove really means by drawing on cultural strengths and teachings to restore healthy life-ways and relationships.

The NativeLove Project's T-shirt was worn on Yellowstone, episode 8 of Season 2 in August. Taylor Sheridan, the Executive Producer and Co-Creator of Yellowstone, has partnered with NIWRC on various projects, including fundraising, to raise awareness of NIWRC's mission of upholding the sovereignty of Indian nations to restore safety for Native women and their children. Yellowstone leads cable as the most-watched summer series. All proceeds of the sales of the T-Shirt supports the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center's NativeLove Project.

The focus of the NativeLove Project is youth-driven activism meant to inspire, empower, and mobilize tribal youth to engage in meaningful discussions with their peers, families, and communities. This activism works to raise awareness about ending violence to restore balance in relationships and promote healthy lifestyles. NativeLove supports Native youth efforts to create social change and encourage them to be good relatives to one another and our homelands.

Since 2013, the NativeLove team has traveled extensively to talk with Native youth, sexual assault and domestic violence programs, tribal and non-tribal schools, universities, athletic teams, tribal community programs, tribal coalitions, and tribal leaders. This year, the team traveled to Orlando, Florida for the 2019 UNITY Conference where over 2,000 tribal youth members were in attendance. The team also traveled to Yakutat, Alaska, joining the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center staff to engage with youth at culture camp. Young people must have the opportunity to lead in creating change within their own communities and empower one another to become grassroots leaders and allies in ending intimate partner, sexual, and teen dating violence.

Youth activists can and do take healthy relationships very seriously. They empower each other to build and expand leadership opportunities, to take their rights into their own hands, as well as become leaders and allies in the movement. As young advocates, they can organize within their community, develop strategies to inform public policy and educate their peers.

To support the NativeLove Project and buy a T-shirt, go to niwrc.org/store/#NL. To explore resources for engaging Native youth in our communities about healthy relationships go to NIWRC's special collection of Native youth materials at <http://www.niwrc.org/resources/special-collections-native-american-teens>.

Thank you for your support!

Congratulations and Welcome Mallory Adamski New NIWRC Director of Communications and Advancement

"NIWRC, welcomes Mallory Adamski, Diné (Navajo), as the organization's new Director of Communications and Advancement for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center! Mallory brings incredible talent and experience in the communications field to her new position."—Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC.

Mallory is of the Bitter Water Clan, born for the Near to the Water Clan, and was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. In her new role, Mallory will lead NIWRC's public awareness and education initiatives, fundraising, and advancement, as well as manage its strategic communications activities. She will also serve as managing editor of *Restoration of Native Sovereignty and Safety for Native Women*.

Mallory began her work with NIWRC serving as the first Communications Manager for the StrongHearts Native Helpline, where she played an important role in launching StrongHearts' brand, website, and communications. She has traveled extensively to promote the helpline and build relationships throughout Indian country and urban Native communities. In the past, Mallory served as a Communications Specialist for San Diego State University, Division of Student Affairs, developing content marketing initiatives to promote student resources on campus.

Mallory is an award-winning independent journalist and freelance writer, having produced stories on Native community health, cultures, politics and environmental issues that were published by the American Heart Association's Voices for Healthy Kids, the former Native

Peoples Magazine, and the former Native Health News Alliance—a Native health news collaborative of the Native American Journalists Association.

Mallory earned an M.A. in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. She also holds a B.A. in Communications-Public Relations and a minor degree in Peace and Justice Studies from Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. She is a member of the Native American Journalists Association and is a former National Press Foundation fellow.



"It has been an incredible journey working with the StrongHearts team, and I know my communications and advancement work for NIWRC will be just as rewarding. I am excited to be a part of NIWRC's next steps forward and for the opportunity to take a closer look at how mainstream media influences public perceptions and leads to stereotypes of Native people, affecting their rights to safety and justice."—Mallory Adamski, Director of Communications and Advancement, NIWRC.



October is
Domestic Violence Awareness Month
#ViolenceIsNotMyTradition
& #NativeDVAM



StrongHearts Native Helpline Exceeds 5,000 Calls from Indian Country

Created by and for Native Americans in response to the severe rates of intimate partner violence in Tribal communities, the StrongHearts Native Helpline has now received more than 5,000 calls since it opened the lines on March 6, 2017.

The helpline can be accessed anonymously by dialing 1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483), serving victim-survivors, concerned family members and friends, youth and teens, adults and elders by offering a direct, culturally-based support line available 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Central time, 365 days a year. Callers reaching out after hours are provided with an option to connect with the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) by selecting option 1.

StrongHearts Native advocates—grounded in a strong understanding of Native cultures, sovereignty and traditions—are specially trained to provide callers with emotional support, crisis intervention, personalized safety planning, and a connection to a Native and Tribal service provider if needed.

“Providing a safe and confidential space for Native women and men to talk openly about the abuse experienced in their intimate relationships is crucial,” said Lori Jump, Assistant Director for the StrongHearts Native Helpline. “We know many Native people hesitate to reach out for help for fear of their abusive partner finding out or because they have been failed by the system so much that they don’t believe reaching out will do much of anything. This is why the StrongHearts Native Helpline exists—to validate a Native victim in their experience of intimate partner violence and support them on their journey to healing.”

The mission of StrongHearts Native Helpline is to restore power to Native American people impacted by domestic violence and dating violence by weaving together a braid of safety, sovereignty and support for callers. Since March 2017, of the 485 Native victims reaching out for assistance*:

- 9 out of 10 needed emotional support (92%);
- 1 in 2 needed personalized safety planning (55%);
- 2 out of 5 needed domestic violence education (43%);
- About 1 in 3 needed crisis de-escalation (30%).

Native advocates further provide a connection to culturally-appropriate and Tribal-based service providers

What are Native victims experiencing?



81% Emotional Abuse

73% Physical Abuse

41% Reported a **Child Was Involved**

27% Financial Abuse

20% Sexual Abuse

15% Faced **Homelessness** As a Result or During the Abuse

14% Strangulation

Statistics reflect only data that was self-disclosed by the contact and does not necessarily represent every call to StrongHearts.

to support callers in a culturally-rooted way. To date, StrongHearts has identified 257 Native providers for American Indian and Alaska Native people, and the helpline's Native advocates have made 2,124 referrals to these services for callers.

**Statistics reflect only data that was self-disclosed by the contact and does not necessarily represent every call to StrongHearts.*

As a collaborative project of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all helpline services are available free of charge.

Recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2019

Every October, advocates and communities from across Indian country and the United States rally together in honor of survivors of domestic violence and support of abuse prevention as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). This month, the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC), the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC) and the StrongHearts Native Helpline are calling on advocates, community members, Tribal leaders, service providers and Native organizations to rise up in support of the Movement to prevent and end domestic violence, which disproportionately affects millions of American Indian and Alaska Native people each year.

Across the nation, Native American women and men experience domestic violence and sexual assault at alarming rates, with more

What do Native victims need?

The top requested service referrals for callers were:

42%
shelter



32%
peer support*



23%
legal advocacy



*value added to database 2/25/18.

Domestic violence is not a Native American tradition.

Does your partner ever...

- Call you names or criticize you?
- Threaten to hurt you or your children?
- Refuse to give you money for food, gas or medicine?
- Isolate you from family or friends?
- Push, slap, kick or strangle you?



STRONGHEARTS
Native Helpline

Get free, confidential support at
1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483)
available daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CT.

Callers reaching out after hours may connect with the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) by selecting option 1.

Trust. Speak. Heal. Together. | strongheartshelpline.org



This project is supported by Grant Number 90EV0426 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

than 4 in 5 Native people having experienced some form of violence in their lifetime and more than half experiencing physical violence by an intimate partner in the past year. To bring awareness to the issues of violence in Indian country, NIWRC, AKNWRC and StrongHearts urge individuals to believe survivors, speak out about abuse and share supportive resources with their loved ones and communities.

DOWNLOAD... the StrongHearts Native Helpline Service Provider Toolkit for ideas and tips for sharing the helpline with clients and colleagues. To download the toolkit, visit www.strongheartshelpline.org/resources to access a PDF of the toolkit.

WEAR... purple in honor of survivors of domestic violence and to raise awareness for DVAM on #PurpleThursday, which takes place on Thursday, October 24, 2019. Share photos of yourself wearing purple—shawls, clothes, hats, nail polish and jewelry—online using the hashtag #PurpleThursday.

EXPLORE... the StrongHearts Blog for culturally-relevant information related to domestic violence, dating violence and healthy relationships in Indian country. Content from the StrongHearts Blog can be accessed at www.strongheartshelpline.org/blog and may be repurposed as long as the StrongHearts Native Helpline is cited as the source.

LISTEN... for Senior Native Affairs Policy Advisor Liz Carr, who will be talking about the StrongHearts Native Helpline and Domestic Violence Awareness Month on the radio program “Moccasin Tracks” with host Deb Reger on Monday, October 7, at approximately 9:30 a.m. Eastern time. “Moccasin Tracks” broadcasts from WRUV 90.1 FM in Burlington, Vermont. Listen to the live stream online at www.wruv.org.

WATCH... a DVAM awareness video sharing a powerful message that ‘Abuse Isn’t Only Physical’ featuring youth from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians in Oregon, who collaborated with We R Native, Sky Bear Media, StrongHearts and the Response Circles Project of the National Portland Area Indian Health Board to create the video. View the full-length video on We R Native’s YouTube channel: <http://yt.vu/c/UCIxRTVkkCkedeQr6WA8sWIQ>

SHARE... the StrongHearts Native Helpline number—1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483)—with family and community members in need. If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, call the StrongHearts Native Helpline at 1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483) to speak with a Native advocate for safe and confidential support, available 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Central time, 365 days a year.



DVAM CALENDAR FOR STRONGHEARTS

October 1-2: StrongHearts at Uniting Three Fires Against Violence Tribal Leadership Summit | Mackinac Island, Michigan

October 4-6: StrongHearts at Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Domestic Violence Awareness Forum | Baraga, Michigan

October 5-6: StrongHearts at Hart of the West Powwow | Newhall, California

October 6: StrongHearts Mallory Black on “Make No Bones About It” radio program on KAOS 89.3 FM at 4 p.m. PT | Olympia, Washington | Stream at www.kaosradio.org

October 7: StrongHearts Liz Carr on “Moccasin Tracks” radio program on WRUV 90.1 FM at 9 a.m. ET | Burlington, Vermont | Stream at www.wruv.org.

October 8: NIWRC, StrongHearts, AKNWRC 2019 DVAM Twitter Chat | Find more details on Twitter by following @niwrc and @strongheartsdv.

October 9-11: NIWRC-StrongHearts at Isleta Pueblo VAWA: Community Healing Through Courageous Conversations Convening | Albuquerque, New Mexico

October 13: StrongHearts Mallory Black on “Two Indigenous Worlds Radio” radio program on WMNF 88.5 FM | Tampa, FL

October 15-17: StrongHearts at Seminole Healing the Circle in Our Own Tribal Communities Symposium | Hollywood, Florida

October 17-19: StrongHearts at Alaska Federation of Natives Convention | Fairbanks, Alaska

October 29: StrongHearts at Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Meeting | Minneapolis, Minnesota

New Resource: StrongHearts Native Helpline Marketing Toolkit

In time for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, **the StrongHearts Native Helpline is releasing a Marketing Toolkit for Service Providers and Supportive Organizations** complete with ideas and tips for sharing the helpline in their communities. This StrongHearts Marketing Toolkit is designed specifically for advocates working to prevent and end domestic violence and dating violence in Indian country and in urban Native communities, as well as supportive organizations serving Native people.

By downloading the toolkit, providers can access FAQs about StrongHearts, resources for presentations and workshops, and social media graphics and advertisements ready to print or post online. The toolkit also encourages service providers to download or request free printed brochures and posters through the StrongHearts website, as well as to reach out to staff directly for an introductory webinar on StrongHearts services.

To access the StrongHearts Marketing Toolkit, visit www.strongheartshelpline.org/resources and scroll down to the 'Downloadable StrongHearts Toolkit' section for a PDF of the toolkit for your use.

Partnership Update: StrongHearts Native Helpline and the Tribal Resource Tool

The StrongHearts Native Helpline is partnered with the National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC) to aid in the population of the Tribal Resource Tool (TRT). The TRT is a national and free searchable database with the goal of connecting Native American and Alaska Native victims of crime with resources and services across the country.

This web-based resource mapping tool aims to be useful for Native American and Alaskan Native victims and survivors of crime, concerned family members and friends, and service providers. The Tribal Resource Tool, which currently includes 357 services in its database, is available to the public and can be accessed at www.tribalresourcetool.org.

The Tribal Resource Tool team is still collecting victim services information to further populate the tool to be inclusive of all Tribal communities to include reservations, urban Indian communities, and villages. If you are interested in including your program and resources in the mapping tool, fill out the online inclusion form which can be accessed at www.tribalresourcetool.org/eligibility.

For additional assistance or to learn more about TRT, contact NCVC Program Manager Renee Bourque at rbourque@victimsofcrime.org or StrongHearts Native Helpline Administrative Assistant Cassandra Roy at croy@strongheartshelpline.org.



Become a part of our network of providers.

We are currently focusing on the following service provider groups to include in the Tribal Resource Tool:

- AI/AN victim service providers
- Tribal resources
- urban Indian community resources
- coalitions
- national hotlines
- non-Tribal specific service providers
- government agencies

To learn more about including your victim services program on the Tribal Resource Tool map, visit www.tribalresourcetool.org/eligibility.

Indigenous Businesses Giving Back: Indigenous Intentions

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Indigenous jewelry brand Indigenous Intentions is committed to **donating a portion of the proceeds of all sales of its Bella Self-Care Bag to benefit the StrongHearts Native Helpline**. The Bella Self-Care Bag is filled with self-care items including a pair of purple StrongHearts earrings in honor of the helpline, because oftentimes women are so busy taking care of others, that we forget to do it for ourselves. Consider purchasing a Bella Self-Care Bag for you and a loved one by visiting: www.linktr.ee/indigenusintentions

Indigenous Intentions is a team of Indigenous artisans and designers who take pride in their culture and love to share it with customers around the world. Creators represent various Tribes and Native nations, which help influence their variety of styles in design and jewelry making.

The company has partnered with MMIWUSA and the Indigenous Peoples Movement with the intention of increasing awareness for and investing in Indigenous communities and causes. We are honored by Indigenous Intentions' support of the StrongHearts Native Helpline.



BY INDIGENOUS INTENTIONS

**THE BELLA BAG IS HERE!
WE ARE HONORING
STRONGHEARTS NATIVE
HELPLINE FOR THEIR
STRIDES TO KEEP NATIVE
AMERICAN COMMUNITIES
SAFE BY PROVIDING A
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND
DATING VIOLENCE
HELPLINE .**

**THE LAUNCH DATE IS
OCTOBER 2019**

**INDIGENOUSINTENTIONS
@GMAIL.COM**

Pouhana O Na Wahine Update

Pouhana O Na Wahine, Pillars of Women, is a grassroots organization advocating for Native Hawaiian families who face challenges related to domestic violence and sexual assault, by exercising our inherent sovereign rights as indigenous people of Hawaii. The Board and its members come from the different islands in the Hawaiian chain.

Pouhana O Na Wahine's Board and Paula Julian, NIWRC, met at the end of August to continue discussions on national strategies for increasing the safety of Native women, priority areas addressing domestic and gender-based violence against Native Hawaiian women, and exchange opportunities with Indian tribes, tribal coalitions and domestic violence and sexual assault organizations. During this time the hui also met with the offices of Senator Schatz and Senator Hirono to discuss the safety of Native Hawaiian women and the ohana.

Native Hawaiian women represent the highest percentage of victims of domestic and sexual violence within the state of Hawaii. The Pouhana 'O Na Wahine is focused on determining how to change this unacceptable reality. The hui understands that relying solely on non-indigenous responses to domestic and sexual violence are short-term, temporary solutions which *do not* address the needs of Native Hawaiians. Taking on the challenge of organizing to increase safety for women and children, the hui continues to discuss their strategy based on a Native Hawaiian worldview for addressing the injustices they have suffered since 1898.

"Native Hawaiian people had their own government structure and processes, including our practices and ceremonies," said Kupuna NaniFay Paglinawan with the Pouhana. "Strengthening our way of life to address violence against wahine is linked to recognizing the authority of Native Hawaiians as a nation. We also need resources to implement the programs rooted in Native Hawaiian voices, language, and teachings."

Important to note that the U.S. government entered into five treaties with the Kingdom of Hawaii as referenced in the Apology Bill from 1826 through 1887, and has consistently recognized its legal relationship with the Native Hawaiian community with more than 150 federal laws, including creating special programs and services for the Native Hawaiian community. Examples include the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act, and Native Hawaiian Education Act. There has also been a legal relationship as evidenced by state laws respecting Native Hawaiians. As written in the state Constitution Article 12, Section 7, reaffirming that the state "shall protect all rights, customarily and traditionally exercised...by...descendants of native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778."

"NIWRC looks forward to our ongoing sisterhood and partnership with the hui to increase the safety of Native Hawaiian and all Indigenous women."
— Paula Julian, Senior Policy Specialist, NIWRC.



Above: Kupuna NaniFay; below: Paula Julian.





Above: Aug. 30, 2019 Meeting of Pouhana O Na Wahine and NIWRG with Senator Schatz's Director of External Affairs in her Honolulu Office Sarah Kaopuiki. Pictured left to right: NaniFay Paglinawan, Rosemond Pettigrew, Sarah Kaopuiki, Mililani Martin, Wanette Lee, and Paula Julian.

Below: Aug. 30, 2019 Meeting of Pouhana O Na Wahine and NIWRG with Senator Hirono's Deputy Chief of Staff of Washington, D.C. Office, Coti Haia in Honolulu office. Pictured left to right: NaniFay Paglinawan, Wanette Lee, Rosemond Pettigrew, Coti Haia, and Mililani Martin.

Resources to Understand Violence Against Native Hawaiian Women

Apology of the U.S. Congress to Native Hawaiian People (PL 103-150), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-107/pdf/STATUTE-107-Pg1510.pdf>

Procedures for Reestablishing a Formal Government-to-Government Relationship With the Native Hawaiian Community (43 CFR Part 50), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-10-14/pdf/2016-23720.pdf>

Restoration of Native Sovereignty and Safety for Native Women, Vol. 14, Issue 3, p 13-17 <https://www.niwr.org>.

#violenceisnothawaiian
#itisonlywithalohathatwethrive
#FVPSA4ALL





The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project, a \$1.4 billion astronomical observatory, had a planned construction launch date of July 15. The 18-story telescope project was scheduled to be built atop Mauna Kea, which is among the most sacred sites in Hawaiian cosmology.

To Indigenous Native Hawaiians who called Hawaii home before Hawaii became the last state of the U.S., the tallest mountain in Hawaii, Mauna Kea, represents a sacred site. It is considered the realm of the Earth's creator and the birthplace of the Hawaiian people. Pro-business groups interested in boosting Hawaii's tech industry want the summit to house what would be the largest telescope in the Northern Hemisphere.

The TMT project has faced stiff opposition from Native Hawaiians and allies due to its planned construction site. It is viewed as a decision that disrespects Native Hawaiian sovereignty, desecrates a sacred site, and highlights who decides what happens on ancestral indigenous lands.

The fight to protect Mauna Kea is 10 years running, with the Hawaii Supreme Court ruling in 2018 that construction for TMT can proceed. Despite the Court's decision, the struggle is not over. Since the first scheduled day for construction, July 15, Mauna Kea protectors have shown up every day to save their most sacred land. The protests have drawn thousands. Mauna Kea protectors (ku kia'i mauna) are taking a stand to be caretakers of this sacred site and their land.

Standing with Pouhana O Na Wahine (Pillars of Women) in Solidarity with the Mauna Kea Supporters Against the TMT



Native Hawaiian Kupuna (elders) and other activists have been arrested for peacefully protesting. They are currently blocking the mountain's access road and have indefinitely halted the TMT project. They have stopped Native Hawaiians from accessing the Mauna where they go for religious purposes, cultural practices as well as gathering. Protectors say their current struggle is yet another chapter in a long history of genocide and the denial of recognizing Native Hawaiian nationhood and Indigenous rights by the federal and state governments.

On January 17, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani was overthrown by businessmen and sugar plantation owners supported by the United States. State and federal title to Native

Hawaiian lands remain under dispute. The United States Congress passed an Apology Resolution in 1993 for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii which resulted in the suppression of the inherent sovereignty of the Native Hawaiian people. The recognition of Native Hawaiian sovereignty remains a continuing struggle.

"The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center stands in solidarity with our Pouhana O Na Wahine sisters and the Mauna Kea protectors," said Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC. "We encourage our movement and allies for the safety of Native women to support the protection of this sacred site."

International Update

By Jana L. Walker and Christopher Foley,
Attorneys, Indian Law Resource Center

Human Rights Council

The United Nations Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body that works to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and to investigate human rights violations. During its 41st session in Geneva, Switzerland on June 24 – July 12, 2019, the Council held a day-long discussion on women's rights, including panels on violence against women in the world of work, the rights of older women, and women's rights and climate change.

The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences presented her report, to the Council, which makes recommendations to eliminate violence against women including a call for a system-wide approach that would further collaboration among UN agencies and regional independent monitoring mechanisms on women's human rights. Among other things, the Special Rapporteur noted that one day of general discussion on women's human rights during the Human Rights Council is not sufficient, also suggesting

that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women be invited to present reports to the Council.

The Council's 42nd session was held on September 9-27, 2019 and included an annual panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples as well as an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Documents and other information from these sessions are available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Sessions.aspx>.

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a subsidiary body of the Human Rights Council and functions as the implementing and monitoring body for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As such, the Expert Mechanism offers indigenous peoples a dedicated access point to the workings of the UN Human Rights System. The Expert Mechanism meets each summer in Geneva, Switzerland, with this year's session taking place in July. The agenda for the session included a panel discussion on indigenous women in power, as well as study and advice on indigenous peoples' rights in the context of borders, migration, and displacement. For more information about the session, visit <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Pages/Session12.aspx>.

Looking Ahead

Commission on the Status of Women, March 9-20, 2020

The 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women will take place at UN Headquarters in New York from March 9-20, 2020, with member states, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs invited to attend. Established in 1946, it is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the primary global intergovernmental body that is dedicated exclusively to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. While session details are not available yet, please note that the period for submitting written statements typically opens in early October for two weeks, and the period for requesting a parallel event typically opens in early November for about a month.

The Commission expects 2020 to be a pivotal year for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere, marking the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and





Platform for Action, and also a five-year milestone in reaching the sustainable development goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the Beijing Declaration, countries explicitly affirmed their determination to: “[i]ntensify efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls who face multiple barriers to their empowerment and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability, or because they are indigenous people.” The Declaration and Platform for Action also acknowledge that indigenous women often face barriers not only as women, but also as members of indigenous communities.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is considered the key global policy document on gender equality and a progressive blueprint for advancing women’s rights. The Commission is responsible for monitoring its implementation. Accordingly, during the 64th session, the Commission will assess progress and challenges affecting the implementation of the Platform of Action, the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment, and the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including the political declaration set out in the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (Beijing+5) that reviewed progress toward achieving the Platform for Action after five years, can be viewed online and downloaded at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration>.

For further information or assistance with meeting registrations or participation, please contact the Indian Law Resource Center at mt@indianlaw.org.

Jana Walker and Christopher Foley are Staff Attorneys with the Indian Law Resource Center located in Helena, Montana.





Highlights of the 2019 Consultations

By Elizabeth Carr
Senior Native Affairs Advisor, NIWRC

Office of Violence Against Women Consultation August 21,22, 2019 New Buffalo, Michigan

The 2019 annual consultation held in New Buffalo, Michigan marked 13 years of annual consultations between Indian tribes and federal departments on violence against Native women. These consultations have driven federal legislative and policy reform for more than a decade and resulted in major changes to increase the safety of Indian women. This nation-to-nation engagement provides an avenue for Indian tribes and the United States to discuss matters that at a foundational level prevent tribal governments from providing safety for women.

At the 2019 consultation in New Buffalo, Indian tribes presented the legal, policy, and administrative issues preventing their tribal governments from safeguarding the lives of Indian women. Many of the barriers identified by tribal leaders were legal ones—existing laws passed by Congress, U.S. Supreme Court rulings from decades ago, or administrative policies of federal departments. Tribal leaders highlighted priority concerns including:

- Amendments to 25 USC 1304 that will address jurisdictional gaps and help ensure that the tribal domestic violence criminal jurisdiction provision included in VAWA 2013 can achieve its purpose;
- improving the justice response to cases of missing and murdered women in tribal communities;
- improving the OVW consultation process, reporting, and response; and
- legal barriers, in conflict with the purposes of the VAWA, preventing certain Indian tribes from protecting Native women such as in the states of Maine and Alaska.

Office of Victims of Crime Consultation August 20, 2019 New Buffalo, Michigan

In addition to OVW conducting consultation as mandated by VAWA 2005, the Office of Victims of Crime held their own one-day consultation.

After years of advocacy, Congress in 2018 included Tribes in the disbursements of the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) for the very first time. In Fiscal Year 2018, the Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) appropriations bill directed 3% of overall CVF disbursements to Indian tribes to address the needs of crime victims in Indian Country. This amounted to \$133.1 million. In Fiscal Year 2019, the tribal set-aside was increased to 5%, totaling \$167 million. (The SURVIVE Act (S. 211) is pending authorizing legislation that would similarly direct 5% of CVF disbursements to tribes for a 10-year period).

While the establishment of a tribal set-aside in the CVF represents a long-overdue recognition of the needs in this area, Tribal leaders throughout the one-day consultation expressed significant concern regarding OVC's capacity and commitment to ensuring that the funds reach the tribal communities where they are needed.

In 2018, DOJ chose to administer the program as a competitive grant despite the fact that tribes had urged DOJ to adopt a formula to distribute the funds among all eligible tribes. Numerous tribes, reported during the consultation that their requests for 2018 funding were denied or drastically reduced, resulting in nearly 20% of the funding being returned to the CVF and not to Indian Tribes. In 2019, DOJ chose to alter the application process and included the tribal set-aside program as Purpose Area 7 of its CTAS application despite Tribal objection resulting in a drastically low number of applications. A second stand-alone solicitation was eventually released. Tribal leaders voiced their concerns with much needed funding for Indian Country again being returned to CVF as a result of DOJ's choice to administer grants in a confusing, ineffective manner.

Throughout the consultation with OVC, Tribal leaders reiterated to DOJ that moving forward they do not want the tribal set-aside funding administered as a competitive grant and that they want flexibility in how they use the funds.

Top 3 recommendations for OVC:

1. Create a tribal workgroup to develop mutually agreed upon formula for OVC funding.
2. Establish a Tribal Unit within OVC.
3. For formula funding, OVC should use Tribal population data, not census data.

Daphne Joe, Wellness Coordinator, Statement, Asa'carsarmiut Tribe, Mountain Village, Alaska Annual 2019 Tribal Consultation Under the Violence Against Women Act

Waqaa, my name is Daphne Joe. My Yup'ik name is Chagiiksnaq after an old man from Emmonak. The English translation of Chagiiksnaq is "wood carpenter." My first language is Yup'ik.

Today I speak on behalf of the Asa'carsarmiute Indian tribe of Alaska. We will submit our final written testimony in the coming weeks. Our tribe supports the concerns and recommendations raised by the National Congress of American Indians.

I work under our tribe's Department of Justice Program, as the Wellness Coordinator. Before that, I worked with Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) for 4 years fighting for our children and families who are under the Office of Children Services with the state of Alaska. Our tribal Department of Justice Program also has Tribal Courts and Tribal Police since October 2017.

There are many barriers our tribe faces in creating safety for Native women. I will only talk about one of these barriers, and the others will be covered in the written statement our tribe submits to OWV.

I would like to share with you the challenge women face because we have no safe shelter in our village.

The population of Mountain Village is about 855 people. With the community growing, there are families that are overcrowded. Some have multiple families living under one roof. This overcrowding can cause a lot of family issues such as fighting, arguing, emotional and physical abused. Because of this, we have had families apply for housing out of our community who have moved out of Mountain Village. These families, after moving, cannot participate in their seasonal subsistence way of life. They lose their culture when they move away. This loss of culture causes many other problems in their lives.

Safe housing is a basic need of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

In our village, safe housing is an urgent need because of our climate. The months of December, January, February, and March are the coldest times of the year. Temperatures reach -40 below, and windchill can reach up to -60 below. Imagine being out in the cold with your kids because you were getting away from domestic violence or being sexually abused. It is a terrible reality that women and children face because they have no other option, no other place to go, no other house is available. Our women and children should not be out in the cold or have no place to go because they are being abused.

I am a survivor of Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse. I grew up in a small house, sharing one bedroom with no water or sewer. My parents drank alcohol most of my childhood life. I've seen my parents fight, and my dad fighting with others. I was violated by a drunk adult at

a young age and was a young mother to my siblings. Because of all I witnessed, I don't remember a lot of my childhood life.

I also experienced domestic violence myself with the father of my kids. I would think over and over that he would change, but everything just got worse the longer I stayed with him. I still remember how I felt. I was scared, thinking that my kids won't have a mother. It took me weeks, months, a year to recover from the abuse I went through.

The more I dealt with abuse, the quieter I became, the more afraid I became. This fear is something I will never forget, and I think it is how all victims/survivors feel. Women often leave what is bothering them and don't heal the correct way but instead make it worse by drinking. Before I started working with the Wellness Program, I didn't know what I was doing but only started understanding by reading the grants narrative.

Services are needed for victims of domestic violence.

I started what is called a "Group Gathering" for victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and stalking or who have a drinking problem, to come together to share their experiences of abuse or addiction. Many of the women didn't know other women in our community were going through the same thing. The Group Gathering made it easier for them to talk to others about their experiences and that is a way of healing. Everyone heals differently by crying, screaming, and even laughing. It's not easy for victims to talk about what they went through right away, so the more Group Gatherings they attend, the easier it becomes for them to feel comfortable to start the healing process.

In 4 months, I've had mothers come to my home odd hours of the night because they had no place to go to get away from their abuser. Our Tribal Police cannot make any arrests without the help of the Village Police Officers because we don't have a holding cell, and the community does not have any dispatchers for people to report abuse. Like in other villages, many crimes go unreported. The closest shelters for Women and Children to our tribe are in Bethel and Emmonak. To get to these shelters you must fly. With little funding, mothers and children can wait up to a week just to get in.

Since my grandpa moved and has to be by the hospital, he deeded his house to me. Since I had extra rooms and bedding, I became a safe home representative, even if the condition of the home is very bad. I have no running water, and the hot water heater doesn't work anymore. I still allow women to come to my home for safety, even if I have no security for the victim, and also put my family at risk.

We ask you as representatives of the federal



government, to understand how and why the history of violence against women in our village. Traditionally we are a culture based on respect and abuse was not tolerated. But today many of our challenges are legal challenges because of federal laws. Today, we do not have services and other programs due to the lack of resources.

I have no choice that I was born Native, a Yupik Native from Alaska. My people survived and learned to live off the land and waters. They were knowledgeable with the harsh winters and understand what needs to be done for their families. We were civil in our way of life. We were never uneducated because we were educated to know our surroundings and to respect one another and love one another. My people felt pain and saw our own die from smallpox, influenza, and all the diseases. I see the pain my people went through.

We are still in the process of learning who we are now. Please understand we have to learn two worlds now. Imagine if I invade your home and order you on how to live your life. Imagine if I made you speak only Yup'ik and punish you if you spoke any English, degrade you on how your way of life was wrong, and mine was correct. That is how my grandparent's generation lived. I watch my people literally die from alcoholism, not because their alcoholics, but because they mourned over these changes.

We are still healing from historical trauma, by having

a Women and Children Shelter, we can reduce the violence in our community and help educate the perpetrators, for our women and children to feel safe.

The federal programs providing resources must be based on our tribal way of life. Federal resources can help us but not by changing who we are, but by supporting who we are as Yup'ik people, who we are as Alaska Natives. English is not our first language. Competition is not our way of life. In the future please make tribal VAWA and VOCA grants non-competitive.

Please recognize our ways of life. Recognize our traditional approach to justice. Recognize Alaska tribes are governments with the authority to protect women and respond to domestic violence according to our Native ways. Each village has its own ways and history. Victims will be best served when we create services for our tribe based on our ways of life.

I want to thank everyone here today, the representatives of the federal departments and also the representatives of tribal nations. Government-to-government consultation is a very important process. It is needed to reach a common understanding of the changes needed to remove the barriers preventing Indian tribes from protecting women.

Quayana,
Daphne Joe



Eric Olson, Sr., Chief
Native Village of Hooper Bay, Alaska
Annual 2019 Tribal Consultation

In one particular case back in the spring of 2013, a mother was beaten to death in front of her two children. The children thought their mother was sleeping and stayed by her side until the father sobered up and realized what he had done. Alcohol was a factor in this case! The father is now incarcerated, and the grandparents are left to finish raising the two children. Despite this horrible event, the children still love and miss both their father and their mother very much!

Now the question is could this have been prevented? Has the father beat up the mother before this horrible event happened? Did the mother wish she had a safe place for her and her children to go before she passed away? Has the father seen his father beat his mother up when he was growing up? How damaged and broken are the children now for witnessing such an event and how broken are their hearts? Is there hope for the children's future to be living healthy lifestyles when they get older?

Not only do these questions pertain to this particular family, but it pertains to all families everywhere!

Now we as leaders have to ask ourselves: Could we

prevent such things from happening? Can we provide a safe place for our women and children? Can we help these families receive counseling to better themselves? Can we break the cycle of violence?

I believe we can! I believe we can provide a safe place for our women and children and we can provide the necessary counseling for them. I believe fathers can get better and treat their families better as well. I believe that we still have hope for tomorrow for our children's future!

If we provide them with temporary shelter, counseling and treatment facilities, and educate the children at a young age about violence; that it is not appropriate and not our way of life. Also living by example, that assault is not okay in any way, shape, or form!

Prevention, education, counseling, and treatment are the steps we should take and how we should approach this common problem in our villages! With the right people, we have the time, dedication, and panning, but we do not have the money to start these services. We need new buildings and staff to run these services, as well as the materials needed for them to perform their jobs. We also need housing for overcrowded families.

—Eric Olson, Sr., Chief, Native Village of Hooper Bay

Reauthorize the Family Violence Prevention Services Act in 2019!

FVPSA Has Expired!

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Grants to American Indian Tribes are formula grants funded through a 10% allocation under the FVPSA appropriation. FVPSA is the only federal grant dedicated to domestic violence shelter and supportive services. A tribal domestic violence shelter or safe home can provide Native women the support, advocacy, and emergency services they need to escape abuse and violence.

“The FVPSA provides tribes with lifesaving grants for shelter and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence and family violence.”—Michael Williams, Secretary/Treasurer, Akiak Native Community

FVPSA funds are also used for supportive services. Tribes have used FVPSA funds in efforts to increase public awareness, for supportive services for victims and their dependents, and services. Yet, despite these advances, funding and services remain nonexistent for over one-half of all Indian tribes and tribally based technical assistance must increase.

Three other essential tribal programs funded by FVPSA include the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center (NIWRC) serving as the National Indian Resource Center, the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center (AKNWRC) serving as the Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center providing assistance to the 229 Indian tribes in Alaska, and the StrongHearts Native Helpline the only national domestic violence hotline that is tribally based. The last two programs are currently funded only through the FY 2019 Congressional appropriations. Unfortunately, funding for both of these programs is on a discretionary, non-permanent, basis.

Support S. 2259

The FVPSA must be reauthorized in 2019. The overarching theme of our recommendations is based on one simple fact. Tribal governments, tribal coalitions, and tribal people are best equipped and situated to help American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) survivors of domestic violence and abuse. The current breakdown of FVPSA funding allows AI/AN survivors to fall through the cracks and only by making tribal programs permanent (such as AKNWRC and Strong Hearts) and reallocating funding percentages to meet current needs can more AI/AN survivors be helped. The NCAI Task Force and NIWRC support S. 2259. It includes four tribal amendments to strengthen tribal capacity to provide shelter and supportive services by authorizing:

1. An increase in the tribal government percentage to increase the reach of tribal shelter and supportive services.
2. Formula funding for the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center to serve as the Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence.
3. Permanent funding of the StrongHearts Native Helpline to serve as the National Indian Domestic Violence Helpline.
4. Formula funding for the Tribal Domestic Violence Coalitions to provide training and technical assistance.

Increased Tribal Government Grant Program Funding

Before 1994 Alaska Tribes were not eligible for funding through FVPSA. In a Solicitor’s Opinion issued 1/11/1993, entitled “governmental Jurisdictional Alaska Native Villages Over Land and Nonmembers,” the Solicitor rejected the view that Alaska Native Villages were not tribes. As a result of this decision, roughly 220+ tribes became eligible to apply for FVPSA funding—nearly doubling the eligible tribes, but not increasing the amount available to tribes.

Permanent Authorization of the Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence supporting the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center (AKNWRC)

Located in Fairbanks, the AKNWRC serves as a domestic violence resource center for 229 Indian tribes in Alaska. The AKNWRC is committed to strengthening local, tribal government responses through community organizing efforts, advocating for the safety of Native women and children in their villages and homes, especially against domestic and gender-based violence. The AKNWRC provides assistance to Alaska Native villages through providing technical assistance



We can do this!

Reauthorize FVPSA in 2019 to include:
Increased funding to Indian tribes;
Permanent authorization of the StrongHearts Native Hotline;
Permanent authorization of the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center; and,
Authorization to create a FVPSA tribal coalitions program.

Increased FVPSA funding for tribal domestic violence shelters and supportive services are needed now!

#FVPSA4All #TribalFVPSA #FVPSA2019

National Tweet:
Increase funding for tribal shelters and support services #FVPSA2019

and training, including needs assessments; public awareness/resource development; policy development and systems advocacy/engagement; and, advocacy on an Alaska Native program of research and knowledge development.

Permanent Authorization of the StrongHearts Native Helpline

Trained with a strong understanding of Tribal cultures, sovereignty, and law, StrongHearts advocates offer one-on-one, peer-to-peer support, and referrals to local resources in a safe and healing environment. All calls are anonymous and confidential. To date, StrongHearts (1-844-7NATIVE) has received more than 1,400 calls from survivors, concerned family members and friends, service providers and more, helping to close the gap in culturally appropriate resources for American Indians and Alaska Natives facing domestic violence. As the first culturally-appropriate domestic violence helpline specifically targeting Native Americans, StrongHearts is also expanding its staff of advocates to respond to callers, many of whom are seeking support as they navigate difficult barriers to justice and safety.

Creation and Permanent Authorization of a Tribal Coalitions Grant Program

Tribal Coalitions exist throughout Indian Country to provide culturally specific training, technical assistance, and support to tribal governments and tribal victim services providers in their respective service area. Currently, 18 tribal coalitions exist with more forming to address gaps in services and as need is demonstrated. A dedicated funding stream is needed under FVPSA to provide additional training, technical assistance, and support for the tribal governments. State governments are offered such a resource under FVPSA through the state coalitions program. State coalitions lack the expertise to provide such support to Indian tribes, and the creation of the tribal coalition program will fill this void. The overarching goal of Tribal Coalitions is to raise awareness, educate, and to provide culturally specific technical assistance, training, and services to advance and enhance the responses to domestic violence committed in Indian Country.

“The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act or FVPSA continues to be the federal government’s only dedicated funding source supporting domestic violence shelter and supportive services. While 10% of FVPSA funds are for tribal governments, it is important to note that this 10% was the set aside created before Alaska tribes were restored to the 1993 list of federally recognized tribes from the Department of Interior. This increased those eligible by 40% for the same 10% set aside. We urge the FVPSA Office to support the reauthorization of FVPSA introduced in the Senate July 24th (S. 2259) inclusive of the urgent lifesaving tribal amendments.”—Michael Williams, Secretary/Treasurer, Akiak Native Community, Annual VAW Consultation, August 21, 2019

Senators Casey (D-PA) and Murkowski (R-AK) Introduce S. 2259 Family Violence Prevention & Services Act Reauthorization

On July 24, 2019, Senators Casey and Murkowski introduced the reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (S. 2259). First signed into law in 1984, this bill includes support for core domestic violence shelter and supportive services, including a dedicated funding stream for Indian tribes. The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Grants to American Indian Tribes are formula grants currently funded through a 10% allocation under the FVPSA appropriation.

“S. 2259 includes long-overdue amendments to increase support for Indian tribes to provide increased shelter and services to assist victims and survivors of domestic violence. These enhancements include increased funding for tribes, permanent authorization for the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center, StrongHearts Native Domestic Violence Helpline and funding for nonprofit tribal domestic violence coalitions. S. 2259 fulfills the federal trust responsibility to assist Indian tribes in safeguarding the lives of Indian Women,” said Paula Julian, Senior Policy Specialist, NIWRC.

NIWRC applauds Senators Casey and Murkowski for their leadership in introducing the Reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (S. 2259). FVPSA is the only federal grant dedicated to domestic violence shelter and supportive services. A tribal domestic violence shelter or safe home can provide Native women the support, advocacy, and emergency services they need to escape abuse and violence.

“Over 40 years ago, battered women and their advocates came together to call for changes in the way our tribal, federal and state governments and societies responded to domestic violence. Shelters were at the center of this grassroots political organizing. The tribal and other life-saving enhancements reflected in this FVPSA reauthorization centers this grassroots organizing at the tribal, state and national levels ensuring that all survivors have a voice in the ongoing social change needed to end domestic violence. Currently, less than half of Indian tribes receive FVPSA funding for shelter and supportive services. Congressional findings confirm that Native women and children are too often the victims of domestic and sexual violence,” said Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC.

We Must Reauthorize the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act!

Support S. 2259!

"Imagine: a mother in rural Alaska has fallen victim to an abusive partner, alongside her two children. The mother and her children desperately need to find a safe place to stay and recover from the abuse, but the closest shelter is nearly 100 miles away and it's already over capacity. The village they call home isn't connected to a road system and the family can't afford air fare to reach the next closest shelter. Instead, they're forced to remain in a hostile environment and the cycle of domestic violence continues. This situation may seem far-fetched to some, but unfortunately in Alaska this scenario is not unique. It is a heartbreaking reality for too many," **said Senator Murkowski**. "Alaska Native women have reported rates of domestic violence up to 10 times higher than in the rest of the United States and physical assault rates up to



12 times higher. As we work to tackle these unacceptable statistics, FVPSA will help ensure victims and their children have the support they need. This is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to addressing the issue of domestic violence and assault, but it's an incredibly important one."



"Family violence, domestic violence and dating violence are a public health crisis in this country. In Pennsylvania alone, more than 1,600 people died from domestic violence-related incidents during the last decade," **said Senator Casey**. "We must all work together to end this epidemic in our communities; that is why I introduced the Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act, which provides vital services for survivors, particularly those from underserved communities, such as racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, seniors and youth. I look forward to working with Senator Murkowski and our colleagues to make sure survivors across America have the support they need."

The Family Violence and Prevention Services Act Celebrates 35 Years!

In 1984, U.S. Attorney General, Benjamin Civiletti, established the Task Force on Family Violence, which issued a landmark report on the scope and impact of domestic violence in the United States. As a result, Congress conducted a series of hearings to listen to victims and advocates to explore how the Federal government could best respond. In October of that year, Congress signed into law the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act as Title III of the Child Abuse Amendments of 1984.

"October 9, 2019, marked the 35th anniversary of FVPSA and a time to celebrate," said Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC. "FVPSA was the first federal commitment creating a pathway to safety for survivors of domestic violence and their children."

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) provides the primary federal funding stream dedicated to the support of emergency shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. FVPSA funds 252 Indian tribes and serves as a foundation for shelter and support services for domestic violence survivors.

Recognizing the need and funding for an Alaska specific tribal resource center continues to be a positive step towards addressing the disproportionate rate of violence Alaska Native women experience who are overrepresented as DV victims by 250% yet are least likely to receive the needed help to begin addressing the problem. When violence happens within our Native villages, the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center is providing information and support to tribes and programs to address the problem, as well as providing education to law and policy makers to ensure the laws reflect the needed change," said Michelle Demmert, **Law and Policy Consultant Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.**

"Over 40 years ago, battered women and their advocates, including Native women, came together to call for changes in the ways our tribal, federal and state governments and societies responded to domestic violence. Native women organized in the late 70's to create shelters and safe spaces for relatives and friends victimized by domestic and sexual violence and hold governments accountable. Such grassroots organizing resulted in the passage in 1984 of the first FVPSA and opening of 2 Native Women's shelters—the Emmonak Women's Shelter in the Native Village of Emmonak and the White Buffalo Calf Women's Society on the Rosebud Reservation. Both shelters continue operating today and serve as beacons of hope for Native women everywhere. Tribal funding since 1984 through FVPSA has supported such life-saving spaces for Native women but only for less than half of tribes across the country. Reauthorization of FVPSA with critical tribal enhancements, including increased funding for tribes, permanent authorization for the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center, StrongHearts Native Domestic "We are thrilled that the statute introduced includes permanent funding for an Alaska specific tribal resource center. This resource will provide our communities the opportunity to break the deafening silence surrounding victims and bring healing to our people with laws, policies and local responses rooted in Alaska Native voices, languages and teachings," said Tami Turett Jerue, **Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.** (Pictured top right with Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Juana Majel Dixon)

"StrongHearts Native Helpline is happy to support this bill and appreciates the bipartisan effort to support critical enhancements to improve services in Indian Country," —Lori Jump, **Assistant Director of StrongHearts Native Helpline.** (Pictured right)



Twenty-Five Years of VAWA: A Celebration Honoring our Native Women Survivors

Reauthorize VAWA 2019!
Support H.R. 1585

September 13 marked the 25th anniversary of the original passage of the Violence Against Women Act of 1995 (VAWA). The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) organized a celebration in honor of this landmark legislation. The event was held at the House Triangle at the United States Capitol. Representatives Deb Haaland and Tom Cole, the co-chairs of the House Native American caucus, spoke during the celebration on the importance of reauthorizing VAWA. Representatives Gwenn Moore (D-W) and Betty McCollum (D-MN), tribal leaders, grassroots tribal coalitions and many others joined the event.

"Since VAWA was first enacted in 1994, it has been reauthorized three times. Each reauthorization has included important reforms that have increased the safety of Native women across the United States. It has done that by recognizing and supporting our responsibility as sovereigns to protect our people. Yet despite these achievements, Native women and children are still suffering. Too many of our sisters are missing, and too often our hands are tied when we want to protect our people. We are forced to rely on state or federal governments who are disinterested and ill-equipped to address these issues in our communities. This is unacceptable.

We are wearing these shawls- with the message "Sovereignty and Native Women's Safety"--to honor survivors of violence, to remember our missing relatives, and as a reminder that the sovereignty of our nations and the safety of our women are interdependent. We are the ones who will bring healing, justice, and safety to our communities. And we are here this week to tell Congress to let us do it.

Today's ceremony is about remembering and honoring the survivors of violence in our nations and celebrating our accomplishments under VAWA over the last 25 years. However, today must also be about working toward a better future. A future where our daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters will not have to shoulder the same high rates of crimes that Native women endure in Indian Country today.



I call on all tribal leaders, legislators, advocates, and allies here today to help us move forward to reauthorize VAWA with strong tribal provisions. We must close the gaps for tribal nations and recognize our inherent authority—and responsibility—to protect our citizens. We cannot take a step backward in this fight. Our future and the lives of Native women across the United States, depend on what we do here and now."—Juana Majel Dixon, Co-Chair NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women.



"We know that VAWA helps keep Native women safe," said Rep. Deb Haaland (D-NM), a citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna who is one of the first two Native women elected to Congress. "But the law does not protect Native women from trafficking or sexual assaults, for example, and it doesn't cover crimes against children and tribal law enforcement. It does not address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women or Native women living in urban areas either."



"The 25th anniversary of VAWA's first passage is a time to celebrate, as well as a call to action. After 25 years of VAWA, Native women still experience the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in the country. In April, the house passed VAWA HR 1585, but the bill has stalled in the Senate. Native women cannot afford to wait. The Senate must act now and pass VAWA HR 1585!"—Mary Kathryn Nagle, Partner, Pipestem Law, Legal Counsel to NIWRC

Photos courtesy of Indianz.com.



"I often say when it comes to VAWA, hunters know where to hunt, fishermen know where to fish, and predators know where to prey. And a disproportionate number of those predators have preyed on Indian Country and Native women. And they have mostly been overwhelmingly non-Native. All VAWA is about, from a tribal standpoint, is giving our people the tools to protect our vulnerable citizens and to enforce justice on our own lands."—Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK)



To watch or listen to a recap of the 25th VAWA Anniversary Celebration hosted by NCAI and NIWRC go to <https://www.indianz.com/News/2019/09/17/recap-sovereignty-and-native-womens-safe.asp>.

Support H.R.1585

On April 4, the House of Representatives passed a Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization bill—H.R. 1585. The NCAI Task Force strongly supported H.R. 1585 because it contains amendments raised by Indian tribes for more than a decade at consultations, national conferences, and meetings. H.R. 1585 includes lifesaving amendments outlined below and the resources for tribal leaders and advocates to implement the legislation and make the changes needed. H.R. 1585 passed by bipartisan support, with a vote of 263 to 158. The “yes” votes included 33 Republicans. As of printing, the Senate has failed to introduce a bill to reauthorize VAWA.



Tribal provisions of H.R. 1585

- Restores tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians for specific crimes involving children and elders, sexual violence, stalking, sex trafficking, obstruction of justice, and assaults against law enforcement and corrections personnel (Section 903).
- Improves the response to cases of missing and murdered Indian Women:
 - Clarifies that federal criminal information database sharing extends to tribal law enforcement entities (that have no federal or state arrest authority) as designated by a tribe as maintaining public safety within a tribe’s territorial jurisdiction (Section 704).
 - Amends the DOJ STOP Formula Grant Program for states (authorized by 34 U.S.C § 10441) to address the lack of victim resources for Native American women in urban areas by providing for the inclusion of victim advocates/resources in state courts for urban American Indians/Alaskan Natives where 71 percent of the Native American population resides due to federal relocation and termination policies (Section 101 Grants).

- Creates a \$3 million authorization for DOJ’s Tribal Access Program (TAP) (Section 902).
- Directs the Government Accountability Organization (GAO) to submit a report on the response of law enforcement agencies to reports of missing or murdered Indians, including recommendations for legislative solutions (Section 905).
- Changes the definition of land eligible for a tribe’s jurisdiction to include all land within any Alaska Native village for the Alaska tribal jurisdiction pilot project (Section 903).
- Expands the definition of domestic violence in the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the bill, to include violence against or witnessed by a child under the age of 18, or an elder as defined by tribal law (Section 706 Definitions).
- Would alleviate the financial impact of expanding criminal jurisdiction by allowing the Attorney General to reimburse tribes for costs incurred to improve law enforcement, tribal court, personnel, and criminal codes (Section 903 Grants).

Update on VAWA 2019:

On April 4, 2019, the House passed H.R. 1585 to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). It has been six months since the House passed H.R. 1585 and the Senate has yet to take action to reauthorize this critical legislation. We are calling for the Senate to act NOW and vote on the House version of VAWA!

On June 19, 2019, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held a hearing on the following bills:

- S. 227, Savanna’s Act, enhances the response to missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Natives by improving access to federal criminal databases; requiring data collection; and directing the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice guidelines.
- S. 288, the Justice for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence Act, provides Indian Tribes the jurisdiction to prosecute crimes of sexual violence committed by non-Indian offenders and helps to deter future crimes committed in Indian country.
- S. 290, the Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act, expands the ability of Indian Tribes to enforce the Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction over crimes involving Native children and tribal law enforcement officers.
- S. 982, the Not Invisible Act of 2019, provides coordination and furthers prevention efforts between the Secretary of the Interior, outside organizations, and other Federal agencies; and creates a Joint Advisory Committee on Reducing Violent Crime Against Native People in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

A BRAID OF SAFETY FOR ALL

PROTECT NATIVE SURVIVORS... REAUTHORIZE THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

#VAWA4ALL #VAWA19 #TRIBALVAWA
#VAWA4NATIVES #VAWA4MMIW



National Indigenous Women's Resource Center

- S. 1853, Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act, requires increased reporting of missing persons and unidentified cases by the DOJ, and the Department of the Interior law enforcement; codifies and provides funding for the DOJ Tribal Access Program pilot; and increases public safety and law enforcement coordination efforts and better handling of cases involving Native missing and murdered persons.

Although the tribal jurisdiction provisions within S. 288 and S. 290 are fully incorporated into H.R. 1585, the Committee's June 19 hearing did not touch on any aspects of VAWA reauthorization, as there still is no draft VAWA Senate bill to be considered.

The Department of Justice has expressed its support for the further restoration of tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians who commit crimes against tribal law enforcement and Native children.

On June 28, 2019, the Department of Justice issued its comments and official position on H.R. 1585, stating that "the Department might support a more targeted expansion of tribal criminal jurisdiction tied to the current SDVCJ cases." DOJ further stated:

"Since the statutorily mandated Pilot Project in 2014, and the full effective date of that provision in March 2015, approximately two dozen tribes have

implemented SDVCJ. Although implementing tribes have reported successes, including more than 80 convictions, it may be too early to so broadly expand SDVCJ. The implementing tribes have expressed concerns, however, about their inability to charge defendants with crimes committed in the same course of conduct as an SDVCJ crime or against law enforcement and other tribal officials exercising the jurisdiction. For example, tribes cannot charge domestic violence offenders for related instances of child abuse or for assault on a responding officer. Similarly, tribes cannot charge a non-Indian domestic violence offender who

attempts to obstruct justice by witness tampering in his case. The Department believes that a more limited fix could be crafted to address these problems and would welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to draft legislative language."

Our understanding is that Senator Joni Ernst and Lindsey Graham's staff are currently working with Senator Dianne Feinstein's

staff to draft a Senate VAWA bill, and that they are working to reach a compromise to introduce a Senate bill. There are concerns that Senator Ernst and Graham's staff are pushing language that could destabilize and limit the way crimes are currently prosecuted in Indian Country. This is why voicing your support for a Senate bill that includes the tribal jurisdiction provisions in H.R. 1585 with no additional limitations or rollbacks is so important!



Call on your Senator to take action on VAWA and spread the word that these important enhancements are needed NOW to protect Native women and children!

A Call for Passage of a Senate Version of the House VAWA, H.R.1585

The NCAI Task Force strongly supports H.R. 1585 and is working to ensure the same provisions are included in a Senate VAWA Reauthorization bill. "We hope the Senate version of VAWA includes the tribal provisions of H.R. 1585," said Michelle Demmert, NCAI Task Force Co-Chair. "Understanding H.R. 1585 and educating Senators to include these provisions is our challenge."

In 2013, one challenge facing our movement was clarifying why some tribal amendments would prevent Indian tribes from protecting women and others would help. Many people do not understand federal Indian law, and it was an ongoing struggle to clarify the difference between the two versions of VAWA.

"VAWA 1995, and each reauthorization has made important reforms to increase the safety of Native women across the United States. The VAWA anniversary celebration is an important reminder of how far we have come in the last 25 years. It is also a reminder that we have a long way to go to restore safety for Native women. Today let us recommit to organizing across Indian tribes and the United States to reauthorize VAWA in 2019."—Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, NIWRC



"In the reauthorization of VAWA, we need to continue to empower tribes to protect their citizens as was done with SDVCJ, by recognizing our inherent authority to prosecute non-Indians. We need a jurisdictional fix to the Indian Country Issue in Alaska, that will address the unique needs of Alaska Natives and their communities and provide a path forward to protect our communities. Local solutions and authority over local issues."

Michelle Demmert, Jaagal Aat
Ch'áak' (Eagle) from the Kaax'ooos.hittaaan (Man's Foot) clan & child of Taakw.aaneidi (Woodworm Sculpin)
Co-Chair, NCAI VAW Task Force

- #VAWA4Natives
- #TribalVAWA
- #VAWA2019
- #VAWA4All



"We pray and advocate for a VAWA Reauthorization that restores inherent tribal jurisdiction and ensures justice to all women and children regardless of age, race, gender, or location. Too many gaps and barriers currently exist in VAWA and those must be addressed in an authorization along with adequate, accessible funding. Every day that VAWA with strong protections is not reauthorized, lives are lost."

Cherrah Giles
Muscogee Creek/Cherokee
Board Chairwoman, NIWRC

- #VAWA4Natives
- #TribalVAWA
- #VAWA2019
- #VAWA4All



Organize to Reauthorize VAWA! Join the Twitter Campaign

Join the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (@NIWRC) on Twitter on the 1st Tuesday of the month until VAWA is reauthorized! October 1 will mark SIX months since the House passed H.R. 1585, the Senate needs to act NOW.

Join us in tweeting for one hour on the following Tuesdays:

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 11am AKST/ 12pm PST/ 1pm MST/ 2pm CST/ 3pm EST

Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 11am AKST/ 12pm PST/ 1pm MST/ 2pm CST/ 3pm EST

Design your own tweet or use any or all of the sample tweets provided below. We need to generate as much buzz as possible in the struggle for passage of VAWA in the Senate. Help spread the word in your tribal community! Thank you for your efforts in raising awareness!

How many more days do Native women have to wait for justice? #Senate MUST pass the House version of VAWA and restore tribal jurisdiction to protect Native women! #VAWA2019 pic.twitter.com/7wHKy9PXFV

It's been 6 years since Congress restored some tribal jurisdiction that #SCOTUS erased. However, it was not enough. #Nativewomen are still murdered and assaulted at the highest rates in the US. The House passed VAWA, #HR1585. When will the #Senate act?! pic.twitter.com/k7TUDUAG9rT

On June 28, DOJ announced its support for the restoration of tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian crimes against tribal law enforcement & Native children. @LindseyGrahamSC, will you commit to restoring tribal jurisdiction in and pass #HR1585?! pic.twitter.com/OP3yQJauYg

The testimony from the @IndianCommittee June 19 hearing was conclusive: tribal jurisdiction over non-Indian crimes against Native women and children MUST be restored. @SenJohnHoeven- we must pass #HR1585 in the Senate! <https://www.indian.senate.gov/news/press-release/hoeven-holds-legislative-hearing-receive-testimony-five-bills-improve-public> #VAWA2019 pic.twitter.com/yvYTOe1aJH

"Support California Native Womyn's Safety!

Because the federal government has not honored the response of tribal governments as it has honored the responses of state and other local governments, tribes have high physical and sexual violence crime rates, particular against California Native Womyn. The federal government has failed in its trust responsibility to assist Indian tribes in safeguard the lives of Indian womyn. The federal government has under-provided to California Tribes for tribal law enforcement and advocacy services to address physical and sexual violence crimes against California Native womyn."

Wendy Schlater

La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians
Board Treasurer, NIWRC

#VAWA4Natives

#TribalVAWA

#VAWA2019

#VAWA4All



On some reservations, Native women are murdered at 10x the national murder rates. The elimination of tribal criminal jurisdiction contributes directly to these high rates of violence. @SenJoniErnst, what are YOU doing to restore tribal jurisdiction? pic.twitter.com/rOPy8VBpzc.

As @TomColeOK04 says, "hunters know where to hunt, fishermen know where to fish, and predators know to prey. A disproportionate number of those predators have preyed on Indian Country and Native women," @SteveDaines, can we count on YOU to pass #HR1585 to protect Native women?

After 25 years of VAWA, Native women still experience the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault. In April, the House passed VAWA, with critical enhancements to protect Native women. Native women cannot afford to wait. The Senate must act and pass VAWA now #HR1585

Violence Against Women Consultation 2019: Urgent Need to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)

Tribal leaders sharply criticized the federal response to the crisis of MMIW during the 2019 annual consultation. Their pointed statements expressed both concerns and recommendations to address the crisis. These statements reflect the urgency expressed by community actions across the country, calling for justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women.

“This social justice movement grew out of the reality that Native women go missing daily, often because of the lack of tribal advocacy services and lack of response by law enforcement,” said Liz Carr, Senior Native Affairs Advisor. “The federal response to the crisis of MMIW is a failure and human rights violation. We cannot continue to ignore the importance of a fully resourced local, tribal response to prevent abductions and murders. It is a continuation of the history of genocide committed against the indigenous peoples of this country.”

Homicide is a leading cause of death for Native women. Violence against Native women and girls has been wrongfully normalized in this country since contact. Historically, rape of Native women was not considered a crime and continues to result in a minimal response by the government. The current lack of response increases the vulnerability of Native women and girls to predators and abusers.

The MMIW Crisis is an Extension of Failed Federal Indian Law and Policies

The U.S. Congress apologized for the long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the federal government regarding Indian tribes and offered an apology to all Native Peoples on behalf of the United States.¹ Yet, concern alone will not create the changes needed to address the MMIW crisis.

“This is not a new problem. It is an old problem. Traditionally Native women were respected. But today we face levels of violence greater than any other group of women. This violence touches every family. Every tribe has Native women and girls who are missing or have been murdered. Since my daughter Hanna went missing and was found murdered, I have become very aware of how large a problem we face as Native women and as tribes. Bad people commit these horrible crimes against Native women, but it is the system that allows it to happen generation after generation.”—Malinda Limberhand, Mother of Hanna Harris, a Member of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe

1. Apology to Native Peoples, 2009, S.J.Res. 14, available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-joint-resolution/14/text>.

Old and outdated laws that the United States, the United Nations, and Indian tribes recognize as barriers to the safety and justice for Native women must be changed. The high rates of violence, murder, and disappearances are not a mystery given the legal barriers preventing Indian tribes from protecting women in their communities. The crisis of missing and murdered Native women and girls is the extension of these anti-Indian laws and leave women and girls vulnerable and unprotected.

“This is such a national tragedy that is increasing in awareness. The question is always why it is so disproportionately high. It is so complicated, but the tragic truth is that colonization, its laws, and policies, have endangered Alaska Native and American Indian women and children in their communities. These perpetrators come in and realize there are no consequences to their actions and are emboldened to do whatever they do. They realize that there is a lack of infrastructure and resources, that there is no quick protection and justice to hold perpetrators accountable. It sends the wrong message about the care of our people. We are just as valuable as anyone else in this nation.”—Michelle Demmert, Co-Chair, NCAI Task on Violence Against Women

Tribal Recommendations: Federal Actions Needed

Indian tribes passionately expressed the urgent need for Congress and federal departments to take action to prevent the further loss of women and girls. Their message, in short, was until Indian tribes have the full authority and resources to protect women and their children the crisis of MMIW will continue. Services for women and immediate action at the local level is essential to saving the lives of Native women and girls. Tribal leaders provided specific reforms as recommendations for immediate action.

Congressional champions have responded to the concerns raised, and five legislative bills were introduced this year to respond to the calls for safety and justice. Four of the bills are included in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 that passed the House last April.

Tribal 2019 Recommendations to Address MMIW Crisis:

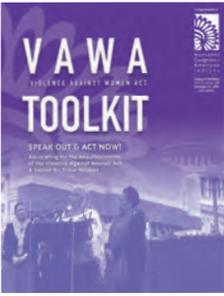
- Authority to Protect Women and Children. Restoration of the full authority of Indian tribes to protect Native women and their children. The House passed the **Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019** on April 4, 2019, and it is a step towards achieving this recommendation. Federal departments should support a Senate version of H.R. 1585

- Resources to Support Healing of Victims, Families, and Communities. The USDOJ Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), Office of Victims of Crime (OVC), the US HHS Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) and Indian Health Services (HIS) provide support for increased tribally-based victim services to the families, and community members of the MMIW as provided for by the **SURVIVE Act**. Such services should include counseling for the children of the disappeared, burial assistance, community healing activities such as walks for justice to honor the disappeared or murdered, community meals, and other tribal activities.
- DOJ and DOI review, revise, and create law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to the disappearance of Native women and girls, including inter-jurisdictional issues as provided by the **Savannah's Act** and the **Not Invisible Act**.
- Support the Government Accountability Office efforts to prepare and submit a report on the response of law enforcement agencies to reports of missing or murdered Indians, including recommendations for legislative solutions as provided by the **Studying the Missing and Murdered Indian Crisis Act**.
- NIJ fully implement the VAWA 2005 program of research and specifically provide Indian tribes information regarding the disappearance and murder of Native women and girls.
- Coordinate efforts in consultation with Indian tribes to increase the response of state governments, where appropriate, to cases of the disappearance or murder of Native women or girls.

“These crimes are far removed from the reach of the state or federal governments. From this local approach, we create the possibilities of safer communities and a pathway for long-lasting justice. We have the possibilities of preventing Alaska Native women from going missing or being murdered.”

--Tami Truett Jerue, Executive Director, Alaska Native Women's Resource Center





VAWA Toolkit! Speak Out & Act Now! The NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women has worked to ensure the reauthorization of VAWA in 2019. The U.S. House of Representatives voted on April 4, 2019, in support of the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act 2019 (H.R. 1585). The Task Force strongly supported the historic amendments contained in H.R. 1585. Now is the time for the national movement to act and inform the Senate of the urgent need to pass a VAWA inclusive of the H.R. 1585 provisions. The VAWA Toolkit provides helpful resources for you to take action. The first four pages are reprinted in this Restoration, and we encourage you to access the entire VAWA Toolkit at ncai.org.

SPEAK OUT & ACT NOW!

Advocating for the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act: A Toolkit for Tribal Nations

Dear Colleagues,

The House of Representatives recently passed a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization bill (HR 1585). The bill contains key provisions that would restore tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians for certain crimes involving children and elders, sexual violence, stalking, sex trafficking, obstruction of justice, and assaults against law enforcement and corrections personnel. The bill also includes provisions aimed at improving the response to cases of missing and murdered Indian women. NCAI strongly supported these provisions, which passed in the House with bi-partisan support, and our current focus is on urging the Senate to take up this important legislation. Now is the time to contact your Senators to tell them why HR 1585—the VAWA bill—is so important to the safety of Native women!

With your help and support we are confident we can pass a VAWA reauthorization with the key tribal provisions intact and send it to the President's desk for his signature. In the weeks ahead, we invite you to join us as we call on our Senators to pass a final reauthorization bill that builds on VAWA's lifesaving programs and services and protects Native victims of violence. We hope you will use the resources in this toolkit to contact your Senators and take action in your community. The table of contents below describes the materials in this toolkit:

- Page 3: Fact sheet
- Page 4: Talking points on tribal criminal jurisdiction amendment in HR 1585
- Page 5: Tips for meeting with policymakers
- Page 6: Sample call script
- Page 7: Sample letter to your members of Congress
- Page 8: Sample letter to the editor
- Page 9: Social media ideas
- Page 12: VAWA Data Brief

Thank you for your commitment to advocating for these important issues. Together, we can make all of Indian Country a safer place for future generations.

Sincerely,

Juana Majel Dixon, Co-Chair
NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women

Michelle Demmert, Co-Chair
NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women

SAFETY FOR INDIAN WOMEN

THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Tribal communities continue to be plagued by the highest crime victimization rates in the country. Indian tribes are the only governments in America who's authority to protect their communities from domestic and sexual violence, child abuse, stalking, and trafficking is limited by federal law based on the Indian status of the defendant. VAWA 2013 recognized tribal jurisdiction over certain non-Indians who commit domestic violence crimes against Indians, but left many gaps in the law. HR 1585, the bipartisan House version of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), addresses these jurisdictional gaps. Any VAWA reauthorization bill taken up in the Senate should similarly ensure that victims of sexual violence, child abuse, stalking, trafficking, and assaults against law enforcement officers have the same protections that Congress afforded to Native domestic violence victims in VAWA 2013.

EXISTING LAW FAILS TO PROTECT CHILDREN, ELDERS, SEXUAL VIOLENCE VICTIMS, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

A recent study by the National Institute of Justice found that over 80% of Native Americans will be a victim of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking in their lifetime. The study also found that 90% of these victims were victimized by a non-Indian perpetrator. The complicated jurisdictional framework at play in Indian Country, which limits tribal authority to prosecute non-Indians, continues to undermine safety for victims of violence in tribal communities.

Six years ago, when Congress passed VAWA 2013, it included a provision that reaffirmed the inherent sovereign authority of Indian tribal governments to exercise criminal jurisdiction over certain non-Indians who violate qualifying protection orders or commit domestic violence against Indian victims on tribal lands. Victims of sexual violence, stalking, and trafficking, and Native children and elders were left out, however. The limited scope of the federal law also leaves tribes unable to prosecute when a non-Indian domestic violence offender assaults a tribal law enforcement or corrections officer. These victims need the same protections that were extended to adult domestic violence victims in VAWA 2013.

IN EVERY VAWA REAUTHORIZATION SINCE 1994, CONGRESS HAS RECOGNIZED THE URGENT NEED TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF NATIVE WOMEN

Since it was first enacted, VAWA has included provisions aimed at ensuring tribal governments have the resources and authority they need to bring safety and justice to their communities. Over the past century, laws and court decisions have produced a jurisdictional quagmire under which a crime committed by a non-Indian against an Indian must be investigated and prosecuted by far away federal and state authorities.

Effective criminal justice occurs at the local level and tribal governments are in the best position to protect Indian Country's mothers, sisters, wives, and children from jurisdictional gaps, and our prevent our communities from becoming safe havens for criminals.

Key Statistics:

- 84.3% of American Indian and Alaska Native(AI/AN) women (more than 4 in 5) have experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking in their lifetimes *
- 56.1% of AI/AN women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes *
- 96% of female AI/AN sexual violence victims experience violence at the hands of a non-Native perpetrator
- 48.8% of AI/AN women will be stalked n their lifetimes *
- 89% of female AI/AN stalking victims experience stalking at the hands of a non-Native perpetrator*
- AI/AN women are 5 times as likely to experience violence by an interracial partner as non-Hispanic White women.*
- US Attorneys declined to prosecute nearly 52% of violent crimes that occur in Indian country; and 67% of cases declined were sexual abuse related cases **
- On some reservations, Native women are murdered at more than ten times the national average ***

* Rosay (2016). *Violence Against AI/AN Women and Men: 2010 Findings from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*. US DOJ.

**US Government Accountability Office, (2010). US Department of Justice Declinations of Indian Country Criminal Matters.

***Statement of Associate Attorney General Perrelli before the Committee on Indian Affairs on Violence Against Native American Women citing a National Institute of Justice Funded Analysis of Death Certificates. (July 14, 2011).

These pages are excerpts from NCAI's VAWA Toolkit available at ncai.org.

HR 1585 PROTECTS VICTIMS AND UPHOLDS THE RIGHTS OF DEFENDANTS

Builds on the successful tribal jurisdiction provision in VAWA 2013. Tribes have been exercising jurisdiction over non-Indians pursuant to VAWA 2013 for over 5 years. They have held serial offenders accountable and have brought justice and safety to hundreds of victims and their families. Despite these successes, perpetrators find gaps in the law. Victims of sexual violence, child abuse, stalking, trafficking, and assaults against law enforcement officers deserve the same protections that Congress afforded to domestic violence victims in VAWA 2013.

Protects the rights of defendants in tribal courts. Tribal courts have a long record of fairness to all parties, regardless of their Indian or non-Indian status, race, or ethnicity. The tribes exercising criminal jurisdiction under VAWA 2013 have demonstrated that they treat all defendants fairly. Non-Indians have been acquitted in jury trials and have had their rights vigorously protected in tribal courts. The Indian Civil Rights Act (ICRA) guarantees due process to all defendants in tribal court. The rights guaranteed by ICRA include:

- The right not to be deprived of liberty or property without due process of law;
- The right to the equal protection of the tribe's laws.
- The right against unreasonable search and seizures.
- The right not to be twice put in jeopardy for the same tribal offense.
- The right not to be compelled to testify against oneself in a criminal case.
- The right to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation in a criminal case.
- The right to be confronted with adverse witnesses.
- The right to compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in one's favor.
- The right to have the assistance of defense counsel.
- The right to effective assistance of counsel at least equal to that guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.
- The right of an indigent defendant to the assistance of a licensed defense attorney at the tribe's expense.
- The right to be tried before a judge with sufficient legal training who is licensed to practice law.
- The right against excessive bail, excessive fines, and cruel and unusual punishment.
- The right to access the tribe's criminal laws, rules of evidence, and rules of criminal procedure.
- The right to an audio or other recording of the trial proceedings and a record of other criminal proceedings.
- The right to petition a Federal court for a writ of habeas corpus, to challenge the legality of one's detention by the tribe.
- The right to petition a Federal court to be released pending resolution of the habeas corpus petition.

In *U.S. v Bryant* (2016), the U.S. Supreme Court held that "ICRA itself requires tribes to ensure "due process of law," and it accords defendants specific procedural safeguards resembling those contained in the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment. Further, ICRA makes habeas review in federal court available to persons incarcerated pursuant to a tribal-court judgment. By that means, a prisoner may challenge the fundamental fairness of the proceedings in tribal court. Proceedings in compliance with ICRA, Congress determined, and we agree, sufficiently ensure the reliability of tribal-court convictions."

Is well within Congressional authority. HR 1585 amends 25 USC 1304, which was passed by Congress in 2013. The general structure of the law and all of the due process protections it provides to defendants in tribal courts are unchanged by HR 1585, which would simply ensure that victims of child abuse, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, and assaults against law enforcement officers have access to the same protections that Congress extended to domestic violence victims in 2013. The Supreme Court in *U.S. v. Lara* (2004) held that the Constitution confers on Congress the power to enact legislation to lessen restrictions on the scope of tribal criminal jurisdiction, which is exactly what VAWA 2013 did.

Does not take any jurisdiction away from federal or state authorities. The provisions in HR.1585 do not in any way alter or remove the current criminal jurisdiction of the United States or of any state. Rather, HR 1585 extends the restoration of concurrent tribal criminal jurisdiction from VAWA 2013 to include additional categories of crime.

Is the only solution. Over the past century, laws and court decisions have produced a jurisdictional quagmire under which a crime committed by a non-Indian against an Indian must be investigated and prosecuted by far away federal and state authorities. Effective criminal investigation occurs at the local level and local government is the best government to protect Indian Country from jurisdictional gaps, or safe havens for criminals.

These pages are excerpts from NCAI's
VAWA Toolkit available at ncai.org.

Tips for Meeting with Policymakers

Meeting with your Senators and Representatives in person is one of the most effective ways to influence them.

Here are some helpful tips for scheduling and attending a successful meeting:

Working with partners & setting up meetings: Your powerful voice is amplified when you partner with others to achieve a mutual goal. Invite other local leaders, such as tribal council members, victim service providers, tribal law enforcement officials, etc., to your meeting.

To set up a meeting, [call your Member's district office](#) and ask the staff member how to submit a meeting request (you will most likely have to submit a meeting request via e-mail). If you are unable to secure a meeting with the Member and can only meet with a staff person, it is still worthwhile to take the meeting.

Prepare beforehand: Before you meet, look up whether your Senator has made any statements about reauthorization of VAWA. Before the visit, you should also decide on specific points you want to raise during the meeting, practice a role play of the visit, and give yourself time to review your materials.

Be on time: Be sure to arrive on time, but be prepared to wait. Members often have multiple meetings and hearings scheduled on a single day and may be running late.

Make an introduction & state your purpose: Introduce yourself and your tribe/organization to the Member or staff and thank them for setting aside the time to meet.

Know what you want to talk about when you walk in the door. Keep your request short and state specifically what you want the Member to do (support HR 1585—the House VAWA bill).

Focus on local issues & state your position: Personalize and localize your request as much as possible. You do not need to be an expert on VAWA, but it is very helpful if you can describe its impact on you, your organization, and your community. For example, try to reference the impact of VAWA funding and/or programs in your community or how many victims of violence there are on your reservation each year.

Make a specific ask. Tell the Member what you want, why you want it, and ask him/her the position she/he intends to take on the issue. In this case, you want to request that your Member of Congress urge leaders in Congress to pass a final VAWA reauthorization bill that protects Native victims of violence by including the tribal provisions that were passed in the House VAWA bill (HR 1585).

Ask how you can be helpful: “How can my tribe/organization be most effective in supporting your position?” Never promise anything you cannot deliver, but offer to do what is possible and helpful.

You don't have to be an expert: Do not be afraid to say that you don't know something. If someone asks you a question that you do not know the answer to, tell them you will find out the answer and get back to them with the information.

Bring leave-behind material: Feel free to use the information from this toolkit to develop leave-behind material.

Always follow up: Thank the Member and staff for the meeting, get the staffer's business card, and follow up with a thank you email. Remind the Member of the issue and the commitment he/she made to your cause in the note.

If you are unable to attend an in-person meeting, you can always call the Member's district office to speak to a staff member and voice your opinion or concerns.

These pages are excerpts from NCAI's
VAWA Toolkit available at ncai.org.

TAKE ACTION! ORGANIZE! STAND FOR MMIWG!!

The NIWRC is committed to building our movement to address this crisis. The MMIW is now in the public eye because of the actions of the tribal grassroots and leaders. "Together, we call for prayer and healing for the families in response to this violence," said Lucy Simpson, Executive Director of the NIWRC. "We call for meaningful legislative reforms to remove the legal barriers to safety for Indian women. We call on lawmakers to restore the sovereign authority of tribal nations to fully protect women and their children."

The NIWRC envisions a return to Indigenous values where women are respected, honored, and recognized as sacred. We lift up our prayers for the families of MMIWG victims that tirelessly advocate for their loved ones, as well as the advocates and allies that continue the hard and meaningful work to provide safety to Native women.

The NIWRC has developed a collection of resources to highlight the issues, concerns, recommendations for addressing missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls within our communities. This special collection organizes information, resources, and curricula drawn from the wealth of knowledge of NIWRC and our sister organizations, partners, experts from the field, and other allies.

This collection is offered to provide resources on cultural issues, national sources, statistics, topical issues and approaches, existing programs, and other available materials to create awareness and promote important discussions about MMIWG. This Special Collection is primarily designed for domestic violence programs, sexual assault programs, sex trafficking programs, tribal coalitions, tribal leaders, educators, advisors, and community members to obtain resources to use in the development and delivery of services. The families of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls may access this toolkit directly. It is intended to assist readers in locating advocates and providing the information they can share with professionals, schools, or resources to use for their own MMIW outreach projects.

RESOURCES for Addressing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women:

- **LISTEN:** "Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women to Guide our Advocacy for Change" at <https://bit.ly/2Mq4ZZ9>.
- **DOWNLOAD:** "Wear Red for MMIW" digital postcards and share on your social media with hashtags: #MMIW, #MMIWG, #WhyWeWearRed at <https://bit.ly/2lyzkn7>.
- **WATCH:** NIWRC's 2019 Wear Red Slide Show for MMIWG May 5th social media campaign at <https://youtu.be/eCloku5VWfw>.
- **DOWNLOAD:** "Tribal Community Response When a Woman is Missing: A Toolkit for Action," at <https://bit.ly/2JdJ7hG>.
- **SHARE:** Help us get the word out to our relatives in need! The StrongHearts Native Helpline is a safe, confidential, and free helpline for American Indians and Alaska Natives impacted by domestic violence and dating violence. Trained Native advocates offer emotional support, crisis intervention, assistance with safety planning, and a connection to local Native resources. If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, get free, confidential support and referrals to resources by calling 1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483), available daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CST nationwide. Callers reaching out after hours may connect with the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) by selecting option 1. For more information go to www.strongheartshelpline.org.
- **EXPLORE:** The NIWRC has developed a collection of resources to highlight the issues, concerns, recommendations, and resources for addressing missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls within our communities. The MMIW Special Resource Collection provides NIWRC's resources and organizes information and resources from the wealth of knowledge of NIWRC's sister organizations, partners, experts from the field, and other allies at <https://bit.ly/2lwrMBb>.

*Silent Witnesses lead the Grand Entry, 2019 United Tribes Technical College
50th Annual International Powwow. Photo credit: Donovan Wind.*



2019 Congressional Legislation

Name & Numbers	Summary of Bill
<p>Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 H.R. 1585 Rep. Bass (D-CA), there are 167 co-sponsors and only 1 of them is republican, Rep. Fitzpatrick (R-PA)</p> <p>Passed with Amendments 4/4/19</p>	<p>-Reauthorizes 2013 provisions and expands prosecution of non-Indians to include obstruction of justice-type crimes, sexual assault crimes, sex trafficking and stalking; and creates pilot project for five Alaska Tribes and expands the definition of Indian Country to include ANCSA lands, townsites and communities that are 75% Native.</p> <p>-Expands definition of DV to include children who witness the crime.</p> <p>-Provides a specific finding for Alaska and jurisdictional challenges because of restrictive land settlement.</p> <p>-Expands Tribal Access Program (TAP) to tribes without law enforcement.</p> <p>-Expands enforcement of tribal protection orders and specifically in Alaska with land issues.</p>
<p>The Native Youth & Tribal Officer Protection Act (NYTOPA) S. 290 Sen. Udall (D-NM), Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), Sen. Smith (D-MN)</p> <p>H.R. 958 Rep. O'Halleran (D-AZ), Rep. Cole (R-OK), Rep Sewell (D-AL), Rep. Gallego (D-AZ), Rep. Haaland (D-NM), Rep. Kuster (D-NH)</p>	<p>Reaffirms tribal criminal jurisdiction over some crimes committed by non-Indians including child abuse and crimes that are committed against certain public safety & justice officials.</p>
<p>Justice for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence Act S. 288 Sen. Smith (D-MN), Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), Sen. Udall (D-NM)</p>	<p>Reaffirms tribal criminal jurisdiction over some crimes committed by non-Indians including sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking.</p>
<p>Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment Act (SURVIVE) S.211</p>	<p>Directs that five percent of the total annual outlays from the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) be provided to Indian tribes to provide crime victim services.</p>

<p>Savanna's Act S. 227 Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) (with 14 bipartisan cosponsors).</p> <p>H.R. 2733 Torres (D-CA) and Haaland (D-NM) and 31 other cosponsors including AI/AN Representatives Cole (R-OK), Mullin (R-OK), and Davids (D-KS)</p>	<p>Aims to improve the response to missing and murdered Native women by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -improving tribal access to the federal criminal information databases, -requiring data collection on missing and murdered Native people, and -directing the U.S. Attorneys to develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing persons. <p>Significant changes in H.R. 2733 from the S.277 include provisions that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand the requirement for the creation of law enforcement guidelines to all U.S. Attorneys, not just those with Indian Country jurisdiction, and require such guidelines to be regionally appropriate; -Require the Attorney General to publicly list the law enforcement agencies that comply with the provisions of the legislation (rather than list those that don't comply); and -Replace the affirmative preference subsections with an implementation and incentive section that provides grant authority to law enforcement organizations to implement the provisions of the legislation and increases the amount of those grants for those that comply, while removing the preference provision in S. 277 that will punish Tribal Nations lacking sufficient resources to implement the guidelines their local U.S. Attorney creates.
<p>Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act of 2019</p> <p>S.2259 Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) and Casey (D-PA)</p>	<p>FVPSA is the primary federal funding stream dedicated to the support of emergency shelter and related assistance for victims of domestic violence and their children. S. 2259 includes four important tribal provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Makes adjustments to the current formula to address tribal sovereign relationships, re-structures the funding for the children's program grants and the newly authorized culturally specific grant program. -Codifies the StrongHearts Native Helpline, which addresses the culturally specific needs and specific jurisdictional issues facing native survivors and survivors living on tribal lands. -Codifies the funded Alaska Native Women's Resource Center to reduce tribal disparities and ensure ongoing access to comprehensive technical assistance from culturally relevant providers that address the unique and urgent needs of domestic violence victims in Alaska. -Authorizes funding for tribal coalitions, which provide vital support to tribes and tribal domestic violence programs but are not currently authorized by statute to receive FVPSA funding.
<p>Not Invisible Act S. 982 Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), Cortez Masto (D-NV), Tester (D-MT)</p> <p>H.R. 2438 Representatives Haaland (D-NM), Davids (D-KS), Cole (R- OK), and Mullin (R-OK) and 32 other sponsors.</p>	<p>Aims to address the crisis of missing, murdered, and trafficked Native people by engaging law enforcement, tribal leaders, federal partners, and service providers and improving coordination across federal agencies. This bipartisan bill establishes an advisory committee of local, tribal and federal stakeholders to make recommendations to the USDOJ and USDOH on best practices to combat the epidemic of disappearances, homicide, violent crime and trafficking of Native Americans and Alaska Natives.</p>

**Bridging Agency Data
Gaps and Ensuring
Safety Act**

S.1853

Senators Udall (D-NM), Tester (D-MT), Murkowski (R-AK), Cortez Masto (D-NV), McSally (R-AZ.), and Smith (D-MN).

H.R. 4289

Representatives Haaland (D-NM), Cole (R-OK), Davids (D-KS), Mullin (R-OK), Young (R-AK), Gallego (D-AZ), O'Halleran (D-AZ), Torres (D-CA), Newhouse (R-WA), Moore (D-WI), and Cook (R-CA).

Aims to improve law enforcement recruitment, Tribal access to federal criminal databases, and coordination between federal, state, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies by:

- Addressing inefficiencies in federal criminal databases;
- Increasing Tribal access to federal criminal databases; and
- Improving public data on missing and murdered Indigenous women cases and Indian Country law enforcement staffing levels.
- Promoting more efficient recruitment and retention of BIA law enforcement;
- Providing Tribes with resources to improve public safety coordination between their governments, States, and federal agencies; and
- Mitigating against federal law enforcement personnel mishandling evidence crucial to securing conviction of violent offenders.

The Struggle for Safety and Sovereignty, A Spiritual Foundation

The origins of the movement for the safety of Native women are deeply rooted in the spirituality of the grandmothers who gave it life. In the early years of the movement, the grandmothers as Native women were naturally connected to their spiritual beliefs, ceremonies, and practices of their nations. Based on the Indigenous beliefs of the grandmothers the relationship between spirituality and the struggle for safety is directly connected. It is organic.

"It is our belief that we are spirits on a human journey. In that way, every step we take in our human life is a spiritual act. Every word we speak is a conversation with the creator."—Tillie Black Bear

The spirituality of the movement is a natural extension of the way of being as Native women and peoples. The foremothers as tribal women carried into the developing movement for the safety of Native women beliefs held by their tribes over centuries since their beginning. The movement for safety was a reflection of who they were as daughters of their tribal nations.

"In the early years, women opened their homes to other women in need, and the children that came with their mothers. In the seventies, we did this as women helping other women, sisters helping sisters, as relatives."—Tillie Black Bear

The beliefs of Indigenous nations held women as sacred and respect a cultural foundation of relationships. These beliefs were natural protections and community safeguards for women within their nations. The

introduction of violence against Native women was part of the colonization of the Indigenous nations by foreign governments, including the United States, and other countries around the world. The very laws and policies of the United States endangered Native women and eroded these social protections for Native women.

"This subject is very sacred because it addresses the heart of who we are, our religion. We have our way of living as Tlingit peoples. Being required to develop Tlingit responses is unrealistic because of the cost and because state and federal responses are not based on the world view of the Tlingits."—Mike Jackson, Tlingit Elder and retired Alaska State Magistrate Judge.¹

The long history of violence committed by the United States through the process of colonization is well understood. The United States, acting through Congress, acknowledged and apologized for these official acts stating it "recognizes that there have been years of official depredations, ill-conceived policies, and the breaking of covenants by the Federal Government regarding Indian tribes."² In response to this reality, Tillie Black Bear often said, "We are a movement of resistance to colonization."

1. Mike Jackson, Restoration Magazine, NIWRC, Vol. 14, Issue 3, at 39 (2017).

2. Apology to Native Peoples of the United States, H.R. 3326, page 45, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-111hr3326enr/pdf/BILLS-111hr3326enr.pdf>.

Wiping of the Tears Ceremony, February 23, 2004, Washington, D.C.

In 1995, following the passage of the Violence Against Women Act services for women continued to be tribally based and grounded in the specific beliefs and healing ceremonies of the women to be served. These services were based on relationships, and the women seeking safety were viewed as relatives. This organic linkage between tribal beliefs and the women to be served was an Indigenous approach to the wellness and healing of the woman from the abuse. The western approach of criminal prosecution was not, and for many Indian nations continues to be, not an option.

While federal grant programs limit the project purposes and services that can be offered, tribal-based services are essential for Native women. These services often are not needed for one time but are essential as ongoing support as the woman continues her healing journey. To be meaningful these services must reflect the beliefs of the women to be served. The concept of victim services being statutorily defined is often in conflict with tribally based services that are specific to each tribal nation.

As a social justice movement, the grandmothers found guidance in their tribal beliefs. One example of this leadership was the Wiping of the Tears Ceremony held at the Senate Hart building on February 23, 2004. The event was hosted to inform and increase awareness of members of Congress of the need to reauthorize the 2005 Violence Against Women Act to include the Safety for Indian Women title. The new tribal title asserted the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes in safeguarding the lives of Native women.

Quilt Walk for Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, December 7, 2015

On December 7, 2015, hundreds of people walked in front of the United States Supreme Court to send a message of no to the Dollar General case. At 9:00 AM, when hundreds arrived and began circling the sidewalk in front of the Court, a social media thunderclap in support of the Quilt Walk for Justice reached over 2 million people. When the case began, the walk paused and those gathered outside and across Indian Nations joined together in a national prayer for justice and safety for Native women. Traditional Chief Arvol Looking Horse led the national prayer for the safety of Native women that looked to a greater power than the United States Supreme Court. The national prayer reflected the strong belief of the people in prayer as a foundation for all components of one's life. Chief Arvol Looking Horse, who supported and assisted Tillie Black Bear and the movement over many decades, shared thoughts before leading the national prayer.

"We are the First Nations people here today. We come on behalf of our First Nations as one voice, one prayer, and united as relatives. We are the voice of our ancestors, our prayers, our songs. Today, we come here to support our relative during the hearing going on now inside the Supreme Court. Today, we say from this day forward no more abuse to women and children. We have come to this place after all the years and generations of abuse to women of this Turtle Island. Today, as we walk with our relatives, we represent ourselves as the original people showing that we honor our traditions, our nation, our beautiful way of life here on Turtle Island. We honor the women as the life-givers, Mother Earth as the source of life, not a resource."

Connie Black Bear Brushbreaker traveled from the Rosebud Indian Reservation to join Chief Arvol Looking Horse to sing a traditional Lakota encouragement song honoring women. She introduced it by explaining, "the song I am going to share today is one that my mother, Tillie Black Bear, always sang in her work in the women's movement since the mid 70's."

The Shawl Ceremony, Capital, Washington, D.C., September 17, 2019

This organic link between the spirituality of the grandmothers of the movement for safety continues today. It has shaped and guided the movement and is recognized in the saying, "*Women Are Sacred*." On the 25th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act a celebration was held on the lawn at the capital in Washington DC. It was sponsored by the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center. The celebration began with an opening prayer song by Juana Majel Dixon gifted to our movement by her mother, elder Loraine Dixon, in 2001.

Following the prayer song Carmen O'Leary, a member of the Board of Directors of NIWRC, led a Shawl Ceremony in honor of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and missing and murdered Native women. Elder Jessie Johnnie of the Sitka Tribe gifted the Shawl Ceremony to the movement in 2004. An honor song accompanied the shawl ceremony.

"Today we must remember who this is really about the women who are not here today. The shawls represent the women that are not here and what they went through."—Carmen O'Leary, Board of Directors, NIWRC.

The 25th anniversary celebration of VAWA reflected the ceremonies, cultural practices, and spirituality of our movement for the safety of Native women. The culture of our movement is based in spirituality, respect, and honoring of women as sacred. The VAWA 2005, Safety for Indian Women title, was passed stating specific



findings including, “the unique legal relationship of the United States to Indian tribes creates a federal trust responsibility to assist tribal governments in safeguarding the lives of Indian women”.³ The concept of “safeguarding” has a deeper meaning than the western criminal justice system’s prosecution of perpetrators. Safeguarding is more wholistic, encompassing the wellbeing of the survivors of violence to continue their journey in life.

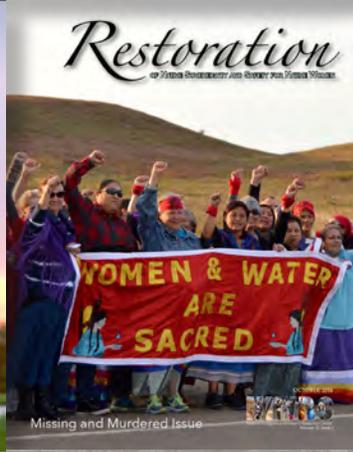
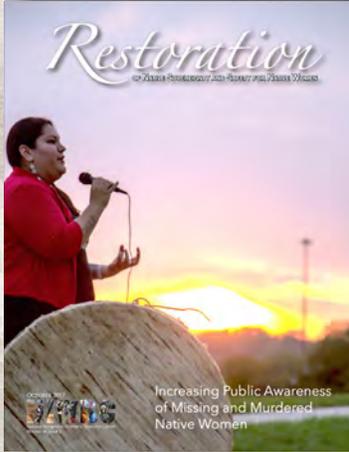
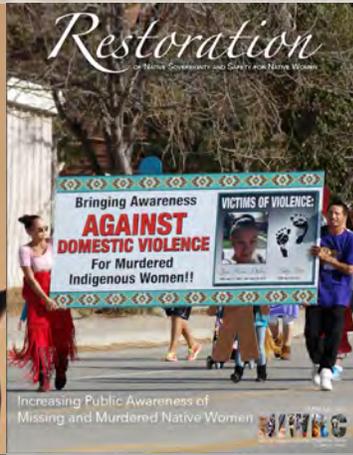
This tribal worldview of safety and justice for Native women offers assistance in understanding the purpose and focus of federal legislation including the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and Family Violence Prevention Services Act, and new legislation including SURVIVE and various MMIW bills.

During the 2019 Violence Against Women Consultation Daphne Joe, representing the Asa’carsarmut Tribe, clearly stated the role of federal legislation to Indian tribes. “The federal programs providing resources must be based on our tribal way of life. Federal resources can help us but not by changing who we are, but by supporting who we are as Yup’ik people, who we are Alaska Natives.”

As we organize to reauthorize and celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act and the 35th anniversary of the Family Violence Prevention Services Act, it is helpful to look to the spiritual foundation of the movement for the safety of Native women. The western approaches to providing safety are important but not foundational to restoring the sacred status of Native women within their nations.

“As women of the movement we play many roles. One is to understand and reform those laws, policies, lack of resources, and so much more that continues to separate us as Native women. Another is to restore the sovereignty and protections that are original to our Indian tribes.”—Tillie Black Bear

3. Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, Title IX Safety for Indian Women Act, Section 1, Public Law 109-162, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-109hr3402enr/pdf/BILLS-109hr3402enr.pdf>.



Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN

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RESTORATION OF SOVEREIGNTY & SAFETY MAGAZINE, 2003-2019

More than a decade ago during the reauthorization process of the Violence Against Women Act, several national organizations came together to take a stand for the safety of Native women: Sacred Circle National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women, Clan Star, Inc., the National Congress of American Indians, and the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence. It was recognized that to fully participate in the national movement to create the changes needed to increase safety for Native women, broad communication was essential. The *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety* magazine emerged to fulfill this task.

The *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety* magazine is a publication dedicated to informing tribal leadership and communities of emerging issues impacting the safety of American Indian and Alaska Native women. The name of the magazine, *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety*, reflects the grassroots strategy of the Task Force that by strengthening the sovereignty of Indian nations to hold perpetrators accountable the safety of Native women will be restored. The magazine is a joint project of the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Women and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center. It is produced and made available during national NCAI conventions and the annual USDOJ Tribal Consultation on VAWA.

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Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN

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Restoration

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**“A Nation is not conquered until the hearts
of its women are on the ground.
Then it is finished, no matter how brave its warriors
or how strong its weapons.”
-Cheyenne**

Violence Against Women Is Not Our Tradition



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