



Savanna's Act

Background

Savanna's Act (The Act) became law on October 10, 2020. The bill is named after Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, a member of the Spirit Lake Nation of North Dakota, who was murdered while she was eight months pregnant in August 2017. She was 22 years old.

The Act aims to improve data collection of missing or murdered Native Americans, clarify the responsibilities of Tribal, federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies responding to cases of missing or murdered Native Americans, and empower Tribal governments with resources and information necessary to respond to such cases effectively. The Act also directs the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing and murdered Native Americans.

Overview

Savanna's Act aims to improve the response to missing and murdered Native Americans by requiring the DOJ to:

- Provide training to law enforcement agencies on how to record Tribal enrollment for victims in federal databases.
- Develop and implement a strategy to educate the public on the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).
- Conduct specific outreach to Tribal Nations, Tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations regarding the ability to publicly enter information through NamUs or other non-law enforcement sensitive portals.
- Develop regionally appropriate guidelines for response to cases of missing or murdered Native Americans.
- Provide training and technical assistance to Tribal Nations and law enforcement agencies to implement the developed guidelines.
- Report statistics on missing or murdered Native Americans.

The bill authorizes the DOJ to:

- Provide grants for the purposes of developing and implementing policies and protocols for law enforcement regarding cases of missing or murdered Native Americans.
- Provide grants for the purposes of compiling and annually reporting data relating to missing or murdered Native Americans.

Additionally, the bill directs:

- Federal law enforcement agencies to modify their guidelines to incorporate the guidelines developed by DOJ.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to include gender in its annual statistics on missing and unidentified persons published on its website.

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