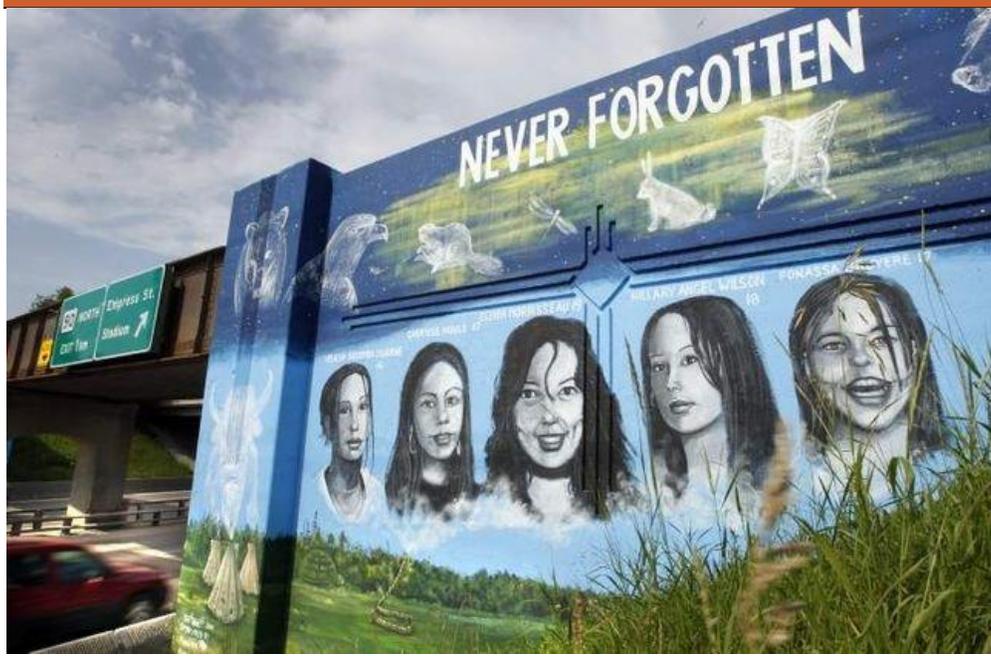


Action Alert!



Montana's U.S. Congressional Delegation Introduces Resolutions to Designate National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls

By Montoya Whiteman of First Nations Development Institute & Toni Plummer-Alvernaz of Montana Native Women's Coalition

[August 16, 2016] – Montana U.S. Sens. Jon Tester and Steve Daines, along with Montana U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke, have co-introduced resolutions in the U.S. Senate and House supporting the designation of May 5, 2017 as the “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.” The resolutions honor the lives of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls whose cases are documented and undocumented in public records and the media, and demonstrate solidarity with families of victims who have suffered the tragedy of losing a loved one through violence.

The resolutions strengthen awareness and education efforts by federal, state and tribal governments as well as agencies, coalitions and nonprofit organizations to end violence against women, and emphasize that little data exists on the number of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women in the United States. Canada’s government has launched a national inquiry into First Nations women where nearly 1,200 Indigenous women and girls have been murdered or gone missing over three decades.



Toni Plummer-Alvernaz, executive director of the Montana Native Women's Coalition, said:

"On behalf of the Montana Native Women's Coalition and the Native women we serve, we acknowledge the Montana Delegation and their staff for recognizing and finally acknowledging the many missing and murdered Native women throughout all of Indian Country. These resolutions in some way validate the hearts and assist in resolving the grief of all the Native families and communities who have Native women that are missing or murdered."

What is next for S.Res.514 and H.Res.807?

On June 28, 2016, [S.Res.514](#) was introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. On July 5, 2016, [H.Res.807](#) was introduced by Rep. Zinke (and 14 congressional sponsors) and was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs. Committee chairs will consider the resolutions and determine whether they will move past the committees to the House and Senate, leading to roll call votes.

The U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (DOJ-OVW), the Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition network, Native American nonprofits, advocates, activists and groups are all working to end violence on or near tribal reservations and communities, and in urban communities because of the alarmingly high rates of homicide, domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking, missing, and stalking among American Indian and Alaska Native women.

[First Nations Development Institute](#) is one of several hundred Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (DOJ-OVW) technical assistance providers that work with grantees through 24 OVW grant programs in the U.S. The DOJ-OVW grant programs are designed to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic and sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking by increasing victim/survivor safety and offender accountability. Looking ahead, First Nations will be monitoring the progress of the resolutions to share with our supporters.

Call to Action

Click on [this link](#) to the **National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) web page to help create a National Awareness Day for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.**

NIWRC is dedicated to ending violence and increasing safety for American Indian and Alaska Native women and children. It offers resources addressing domestic violence and safety for American Indian and Alaska Native women. Resources are available online at www.niwrc.org/resources



List of Resources

The National Institute of Justice published, in May 2016, findings from the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010)* with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) adult men and women about the prevalence of violence. The purpose of the report was to describe the lifetime and annual prevalence of violence experienced by AI/AN women and men. Data showed 55.5% of

AI/AN women had experienced physical violence in their lifetime, and 43.25% of AI/AN men had experienced physical violence in their lifetime.

Statistical data and surveys like this are one step toward finding understanding about intimate partner violence and developing solutions, and they highlight the continued need for services with the goals of creating violence-free American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

To read the National Institute of Justice Research Report, [click here](#).

Click on [this link](#) to press sources leading to the resolutions' development. Also, news stories are available here:

- [Billings Gazette](#)
- [KTVQ](#)

A Full Report of the Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women by Tjaden and Thoennes, U.S. DOJ 2010, can be accessed through [this link](#).

A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: A Report to the President & Congress of the United States by the Indian Law and Order Commission can be found [here](#).

For a list of DOJ-OVW Grant Programs to End Violence Against Women, [click here](#).

A comprehensive list of Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions can be obtained [here](#).

To learn more about resolutions or bills affecting American Indian or Alaska Natives, visit www.govtrack.us and use the search box to find information on "Native Americans."