

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

November 11, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary of Interior  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 2024

Dear Attorney General Garland and Secretary Haaland:

We write today to urge you to swiftly implement the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) recommendations from its recent report, "Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women: New Efforts Are Underway but Opportunities Exist to Improve the Federal Response. This report is the first major government study of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP) crisis. It confirmed that American Indian and Alaska Native women are far more likely to experience violence, and human trafficking rates in Indian Country are substantially higher than other parts of the United States. The report recognizes the work that the Department of Justice, Department of Interior, Congress, and Native communities have taken to address this issue. While we've made some progress in addressing the MMIP crisis, we still have much more to do.


Specifically, the report found that the passage of *Savanna's Act* and the *Not Invisible Act* could help address aspects of the crisis if properly implemented by the Department of Justice and Department of Interior. In addition to faithfully executing these laws, we urge you to quickly implement the GAO's recommendations:

1. The Attorney General should develop a plan—including key steps, who will achieve them, and by when—for accomplishing ongoing analyses of data in existing federal databases and future data that may be gathered to identify relevant trends in cases of missing or murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women and areas of concern.
2. The Attorney General should develop a plan, including milestone dates, to develop and implement a dissemination strategy to educate the public about the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).
3. The Attorney General should develop a plan, including milestone dates, to conduct specific outreach to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations regarding the ability to publicly enter information regarding missing persons through NamUs or other non-law enforcement sensitive portal.
4. The Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Attorney General, should finalize its draft plan establishing and appointing all members to the Joint Commission on Reducing Violent Crime Against Indians, as required by the *Not Invisible Act*, and include milestone dates for all steps in the process.

We are pleased that both agencies concurred with the GAO's findings and urge you to promptly implement all four recommendations. We also ask that you provide regular updates to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and the House of Representatives National Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples on your efforts.


The MMIP crisis continue to affect Native families and communities across the United State and deserved your upmost attention. We stand ready to work you to implement these recommendations, combat the MMIP crisis, and to improve public safety in Indian Country.

Sincerely,



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Jon Tester  
United States Senator



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Brian Schatz  
United States Senator




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Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator




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Raúl M. Grijalva  
United States Representative



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
United States Representative



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



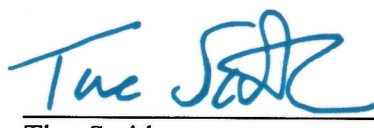
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Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator




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John Hoeven  
United States Senator



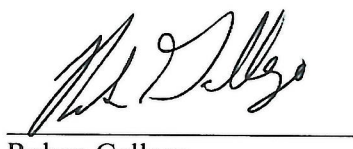
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Tina Smith  
United States Senator



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Ed Case  
United States Representative



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Ruben Gallego  
United State Representative