

Operation Lady Justice

Federal Government Resources on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP), Part 1—Congressional Publications, Executive Orders, Proclamations, and Public Laws, and Task Forces and Initiatives, 2015–2022

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Background

Sadly, the victimization of Native Americans is not new. At a House hearing in 2019, Tamra “Tami” Nagle and Sarah Deer testified on the historical mistreatment of Native people, which has included abduction, assault, and murder. Both spoke of their hope that recent attention on the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous persons (MMIP) would bring needed change.¹

The “recent attention” they mentioned began in the US government in 2015. While not focused on MMIP, a Senate hearing addressed the needs of victims of crime in Indian country.² This hearing highlighted the high rates of violent crime victimization, inadequacies of current criminal justice systems, and difficulties faced by Native Americans.

In 2016, a Department of Justice report featured detailed statistics on the high rate of violent crime victimization among American Indian and Alaska Natives, particularly for women.³ This survey has since been referenced heavily, particularly due to the lack of other statistics available. That same year, the Senate and House both introduced the first of several resolutions to mark May 5 as a day of awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.⁴ Neither of these passed, but similar resolutions have been made in subsequent Congresses, including annual resolutions that have passed in the Senate.

In 2017, a Senate hearing discussed three bills introduced about MMIP,⁵ the most important of which was S. 1942, Savanna’s Act. Savanna’s Act, named for murder and fetal abduction victim Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, would be reintroduced until its passage in 2020.⁶ From 2018 to 2019, three additional congressional hearings directly on MMIP were held.⁷ Each of these hearings featured testimony from government officials and Native persons, and they revealed several areas contributing to the crisis, such as jurisdictional and geographic challenges, and lack of needed resources and data.

In 2019, President Trump issued Executive Order 13898 that established the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaskan Natives, also known as *Operation Lady Justice*.⁸ The task force, which sought to address the MMIP crisis, included members from the Departments of Justice, Interior, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Housing and Urban Development. The task force sunset in 2021.

In 2020, President Trump issued the first presidential proclamation on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, which recognized May 5 as a day of awareness.⁹ Unlike the earlier Congressional resolutions, this proclamation featured additional detail about the MMIP crisis and actions taken to address it. Savanna’s Act and the Not Invisible Act of 2019 also passed in 2020.¹⁰ Among other actions, the Not Invisible Act of 2019 established a joint commission between the Departments of Interior and Justice.

In 2021, President Biden issued a presidential proclamation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day.¹¹ He also issued Executive Order 14053, *Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People*.¹² This executive order seeks to address the underlying causes of the MMIP crisis and to foster long-term improvement to public safety for Native Americans.

As a result of these combined efforts between 2015 and the present, several government resources related to the MMIP crisis exist. A recent CRS report provides an excellent overview and introduction to the topic.¹³ However, navigating the topic can still be challenging. For example, different sources use different labels for the topic, and “missing and murdered” and “missing or murdered” are often used interchangeably. “Indigenous people” or “Indigenous persons” are more recent and inclusive than “Indigenous women” or “Indigenous women and girls.”

“American Indians and Alaska Natives” appears in conjunction with *Operation Lady Justice*, while “Native women” or “Native women and girls” are some of the earliest terms used. Acronyms used include MMIP, MMIW, and MMIWG.

I hope this series of annotated bibliographies will help librarians and researchers navigate government resources available on this sensitive topic. This first bibliography covers Congressional Publications; Executive Orders, Proclamations, and Public Laws; and Task Forces and Initiatives. Publications in each section are organized from earliest to most recent. The timeframe covered is from 2015 to present.

Several of the following sources name victims. For brevity, I list their names here in alphabetical order by last name and include variants in parentheses:

Veronica Abouchuk; Minnie Andy; Katczinski Ariel Begay (Ariel Begay); Teri Benally; Margie Childers; Monica Choyou; Linda Dave; Savanna Greywind (AKA Savanna Greywind-LaFontain, Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind); Freda Gun; Judylee Guthrie; Hanna Harris; Kathleen Jo Henry; Marena Holiday; Ryan Shey Hoskie; Mackenzie Howard (AKA MacKenzie Howard); Ashley Johnson-Barr; Ruthie Kindness; Destiny Lloyd; Olivia Lone Bear; Rosalita Longee; Ashley Loring-Heavy Runner (AKA Ashley Loring Heavy Runner); Faren McGirt; Ruthanne McGirt Staller Rex; Peggie McGuire; Ashley Mike (AKA Ashlynn Mike, Ashlynnne Mike); Ian Mike; Alillia “Lala” Minthorn; Henny Scott; Sophie Sergie; Kaysera Stops Pretty Places; Rosenda Strong; Martha Toms; Francile Turpin (AKA Francile Ella Turpin); Misty Upham; Frederick Watson; Amber Webster; Jade Williams

Congressional Publications

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *Addressing the Need for Victim Services in Indian Country*, June 10, 2015.

This hearing is one of the earliest to address the high violent crime victimization rates among Native Americans. Senator John Barrasso’s opening statement describes how the Crime Victims Fund is inadequate in addressing tribal needs, and he explains that the hearing seeks testimony on how to improve federal funding and program development. Witness testimony combines statistics and descriptions of services to highlight the heavy need for victim services, limited resources to provide them, and the unique challenges tribal communities face. Two witnesses are Native Americans: A. T. “Rusty” Stafne, Chairman, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, and Dianne Barke Harrold, Tribal Court Judge, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma and Member, Cherokee Nation Victim Task Force. Prepared statements in the appendix represent a variety of Tribes

and tribal organizations. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo62362>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Report, *Indian Tribal Justice Act to Secure Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victims of Crime, and for Other Purposes : Report (to accompany S. 1704)*, December 3, 2015.

This report presents the full text of proposed bill S. 1704, which would have amended the Indian Tribal Justice Act to create funding from the Crime Victims Fund. This would provide tribal grants and increase grant flexibility to build and to create access for “culturally appropriate, community-specific services.” While the bill did not pass, the “Background,” “Need for Legislation,” and “Legislative History” sections may be useful, particularly in connection with the Senate Hearing described above. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo63893>.

Designating May 5, 2017, as the “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls,” S.R. 514. 114th Congress, 2nd session, Congressional Record p. S4651-4652, June 28, 2016.

Senators Steven Daines sponsored, and Jon Tester co-sponsored, this proposed resolution to designate May 5, 2017, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution was the first of several resolutions in the Senate and House seeking to designate this day of awareness. It did not pass. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2016-06-28/pdf/CREC-2016-06-28-pt1-PgS4651-2.pdf>.

Expressing Support for Designation of May 5, 2017, as “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls,” H.R. 807, 114th Congress, 2nd session, July 5, 2016.

Representative Ryan Zinke sponsored, and ten others co-sponsored, this proposed resolution to designate May 5, 2017, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. This resolution was the first House resolution seeking to designate this day of awareness. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114hres807ih/pdf/BILLS-114hres807ih.pdf>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, S.R. 60. 115th Congress, 1st session, Congressional Record p. S2728, May 3, 2017.

Sen. Daines sponsored, and six Senators co-sponsored, this resolution, which designated May 5, 2017, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution passed with unanimous consent. *Access:*

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/CREC-2017-05-03/CREC-2017-05-03-pt1-PgS2728-3/>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *S. 1870, S. 1953, and S. 1942*, October 25, 2017.

This hearing examines three bills from this legislative session. S. 1870, the Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment (SURVIVE) Act, would create a tribal grant program to improve public safety and strengthen victim services in Indian Country by increasing the amount of money available to Indian tribes. It would also provide more flexibility in using funds, and tailor services to tribal communities. S. 1953, the Tribal Law and Order Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2017, would reauthorize key tribal public safety programs and improve justice in Indian country. It includes amendments based on tribal, BIA, DOJ, and tribal public safety advocates recommendations. S. 1942, Savanna's Act, would address the issue of missing and murdered Native women by improving access to federal criminal databases, requiring data collection. It also directs the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols for investigation. Four of the witnesses are Native Americans: R. Trent Shores, US Attorney Northern District of Oklahoma; Dave Flute, Chairman Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation; Joel Boyd, Colville Business Council; and Carmen O'Leary, Executive Director Native Women's Society of the Great Plains. Prepared statements in the appendix represent a variety of Tribes and tribal organizations. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo110660>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, S.R. 401. 115th Congress, 2nd session, Congressional Record p. S2443, April 25, 2018.

Sen. Daines sponsored, and eleven others co-sponsored this resolution, which designated May 5, 2018, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution passed with unanimous consent. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2018-04-25/pdf/CREC-2018-04-25-pt1-PgS2443.pdf>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, 115th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. E621, May 10, 2018.

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici recognized May 5, 2018, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. She mentioned the 2016 DOJ study, a recently passed resolution about human trafficking in Portland, and emphasized the need to do more to protect Native women.

Access: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2018-05-10/pdf/CREC-2018-05-10-pt1-PgE621-3.pdf>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *Missing and Murdered: Confronting the Silent Crisis in Indian Country*, December 12, 2018.

This hearing directly addresses the problem of “missing and murdered individuals in Indian Country.” Sen. Mark Udall identifies three core issues gleaned from oversight and legislative hearings of this Congress, namely “poor coordination, limited data and insufficient resources.” Witness testimony details specific challenges in all three areas, as well as unique challenges based on geography. Three witnesses represent the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Bureau of Investigations, and National Institute of Justice. Three witnesses are Native American women: Kimberly Loring-Heavy Runner, sister of murder victim Ashley Loring-Heavy Runner; Patricia Alexander, Co-Chair of Violence Against Women Task Force; and Amber Crotty, Navajo Nation Council. Early in the hearing, Sen. Daines describes the passing of his annual resolution to establish May 5, the birthdate of murder victim Hanna Harris, as a national day of awareness. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo123064>.

Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States, Committee on Natural Resources, House Oversight Hearing, *Unmasking the Hidden Crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW): Exploring Solutions to End the Cycle of Violence*, March 14, 2019.

Rep. Ruben Gallego describes the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women, using four victims to highlight the need for legislation. Rep. David Cook notes the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 have not stopped high rates of domestic violence against Native women. All witnesses are Native women. Prof. Sarah Deer, Muscogee Creek Nation, addresses the current crisis's historical roots and how any solution needs “sustained, multi-year, multi-faceted efforts.” North Dakota State Rep. Ruth Buffalo of the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Chiricahua Apache tribes describes four bills she introduced to address this epidemic. She also describes her personal participation in the search for Savanna Greywind. She recommends conducting a national inquiry with hearings, and advocate for including missing and murdered indigenous people in the scope of the Offices of Violence against Women and Victims of Crime. Mary Nagle, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and legal counsel for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, describes how the organization has raised awareness of

the MMIW crisis and illustrates a general lack of access and resources needed. Tamra “Tami” Jerue Athabaskan Anvik Tribe and Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center (ANWRC), describes challenges faced specifically in Alaska. Two witnesses mention the Sovereign Bodies Institute, an organization collecting information on missing and murdered indigenous women. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo120690>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *To Protect and Serve: Joint Law Enforcement Efforts in Building Safe Tribal Communities and Stopping Dangerous Drugs from Entering Indian Country*, March 20, 2019.

This hearing focuses on how to promote safety and strengthen law enforcement in Indian country. In his opening statement, Sen. John Hoeven describes legislative efforts to address this topic, including the SURVIVE Act, Tribal Law Enforcement Act (TLOA), and Savanna’s Act. The witnesses testify to local and state efforts and concerns, such as jurisdiction and laws, particularly in North and South Dakota. While this hearing is not specifically focused on missing and murdered indigenous persons, the topic appears in some testimony and in questions and answers. Five witnesses are Native American: Mike Faith, Chairman, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; Myra Pearson, Chairwoman, Spirit Lake Nation; Lisa Jackson, Council Member, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate; Judy Brugh, Council Member, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation Tribal Council; and Jamie Azure, Chairman, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. Unfortunately, some testimony is missing due to indiscernible audio recordings. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo127290>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, S.R. 144. 116th Congress, 1st session, Congressional Record p. S2623, May 2, 2019.

Sen. Daines sponsored, and twelve other Senators co-sponsored this resolution, which designated May 5, 2019, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution passed with unanimous consent. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-05-02/pdf/CREC-2019-05-02-pt1-PgS2623-3.pdf>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *S. 227, S. 288, S. 290, S. 982, and S. 1853*, June 19, 2019.

This hearing includes discussion of S. 227, Savanna’s Act, which ultimately passed in 2020. It includes statements about lack of prepared testimony, describes related legislation pending

at the time, and includes some letters entered into evidence. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo129678>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p.H4921-H4922, June 20, 2019.

Rep. Newhouse speaks about the missing and murdered indigenous women crisis and the introduction of Savanna’s Act in this legislative session. His statement includes statistics and local efforts to address the issue. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-06-20/pdf/CREC-2019-06-20-pt1-PgH4921-4.pdf>.

Addressing the Murder of Rosenda Strong, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p.H5981-H5982, July 17, 2019.

Rep. Dan Newhouse reports the body of Rosenda Strong, who went missing in October 2018, was found on the Yakima Nation reservation. He uses her missing persons case, and now murder case, to highlight the urgency of addressing the murdered and missing indigenous women crisis. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-07-17/pdf/CREC-2019-07-17-pt1-PgH5981-7.pdf>.

Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples of the United States, Committee on Natural Resources, House Oversight Hearing, *Reviewing the Trump Administration’s Approach to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW) Crisis*, September 11, 2019.

This hearing focuses on testimony from the Trump administration about steps taken to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) crisis. Rep. Gallego mentions the March 2019 *Unmasking the Hidden Crisis* Hearing at which Native women spoke. Of the three witnesses, only one is a Native American, Jeannie Hoyland, Commissioner for Administration for Native Americans, DHS, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe. She summarizes efforts within the HHS to serve the communities and victims of violence in the MMIW crisis, including programs dedicated to early childhood, homeless youth, and family violence prevention, and funding resources to serve populations vulnerable to human trafficking and MMIW. She also mentions acting as an advocate via several groups, including a listening session focused on cold cases, violent crimes, human trafficking, and MMIW. Charles Addington, Deputy Bureau Director, summarizes efforts within the Department of the Interior to address the MMIW crisis, including revising data collection for missing persons, creating joint training programs for the BIA Indian Police Academy, and holding three listening sessions with Native communities. John Anderson, US Attorney for the District of New Mexico, summarizes efforts from the Department of Justice, including

efforts to establish improved, standardized protocols for data collection, reporting, and case management, a training program held in Montana, assisting tribes integrate Amber Alert protocols, outreach and training for NamUs, and expanding the Tribal Access Program (TAP). *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo131293>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p. H8178-H8184, October 16, 2019.

Rep. Newhouse raises a Special Order to discuss the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women, particularly in Washington, and the proposed Savanna's Act and Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act. He yields, at various moments, to several Representatives, whose testimony is described below. Rep. Greg Gianforte describes murder victim Kaysera Stops Pretty Places as an example of the crisis in Montana, and indicates his support for the previously mentioned bills. Rep. Torres summarizes previous legislative attempts to address this issue, including her introduction of Savanna's Act. Rep. Armstrong describes the cases of Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind and Olivia Lone Bear to highlight areas the proposed bills could address. Rep. Torres Small speaks on behalf of Native Americans in New Mexico and seeks support for Savanna's Act, which she co-sponsored. Rep. Don Bacon's testimony includes statistics from Nebraska highlighting the crisis and lack of reporting at a federal level. Rep. Dusty Johnson summarizes the need for Savanna's Act, which he co-sponsored. Rep. Newhouse ends the testimony with letters from various Tribes, Nations, and groups that received no response from the House Judiciary and Natural Resources Committees. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-10-16/pdf/CREC-2019-10-16-pt1-PgH8178.pdf>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p. E1300, October 17, 2019.

Rep. Newhouse includes a letter into the record regarding the Special Order on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women on October 17, 2019. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-10-17/pdf/CREC-2019-10-17-pt1-PgE1300-3.pdf>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p. E1301, October 17, 2019.

Rep. Don Young speaks on the missing and murdered indigenous women crisis. He describes jurisdictional difficulties faced specifically in Alaska and urges Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and pass the

Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-10-17/pdf/CREC-2019-10-17-pt1-PgE1301.pdf>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p. E1307, October 18, 2019.

Rep. Tom Cole speaks on the missing and murdered indigenous women crisis. He describes statistics of victimization and urges Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-10-18/pdf/CREC-2019-10-18-pt1-PgE1307.pdf>.

Savanna's Act, 116th Congress, 1st Session, Congressional Record p. S6358-S6361, October 31, 2019.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski provides national and state-level statistics and initiatives to address Native women who are victims of violence. She describes Savanna's Act and the Not Invisible Act and asks for support of those bills. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-10-31/pdf/CREC-2019-10-31-pt1-PgS6358-6.pdf>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Report, *To Direct the Attorney General to Review, Revise, and Develop Law Enforcement and Justice Protocols Appropriate to Address Missing and Murdered Indians, and for Other Purposes : Report (to Accompany S. 227) (Including Cost Estimate of the Congressional Budget Office)*, January 5, 2020.

This report includes the full text of S. 227, Savanna's Act, in addition to an analysis of the bill and a recommendation to pass the amended bill. The "Background" section states the bill takes its name from murder victim Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind. The "Need for Legislation" and "Legislative Hearing" sections provide the context in which the bill was written, and ultimately, passed. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo130955>

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Report, *To Increase Intergovernmental Coordination to Identify and Combat Violent Crime Within Indian Lands and of Indians : Report (to Accompany S. 982) (Including Cost Estimate of the Congressional Budget Office)*, February 11, 2020.

This report presents the full text of the Not Invisible Act of 2019, in addition to an amendment, an analysis of the bill, and a recommendation to pass the amended bill. The "Need for Legislation" and "Legislative History" sections provide the context in which the bill was written and, ultimately, passed. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo132166>.

Bringing Justice to Missing and Murdered Native Women, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. H1128, February 13, 2020.

Rep. Stauber mentions the 5th annual Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Memorial March in Minnesota, co-sponsoring Savanna's Act, and the need to bring justice to victims. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-02-13/pdf/CREC-2020-02-13-pt1-PgH1128-3.pdf>.

Ashley Johnson-Barr Day, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. S1716-S1717, March 12, 2020.

Sen. Murkowski announces that the Alaska State Senate passed a bill to establish March 12 as Ashley Johnson-Barr Day and describes the murder victim's case. She describes the passing of Savanna's Act and the Not Invisible Act through the Senate and thanks her colleagues for their support. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-03-12/pdf/CREC-2020-03-12-pt1-PgS1716-3.pdf>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. E427-E428, May 5, 2020.

Rep. Bonamici recognizes May 5, 2020, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. She mentions co-sponsoring Savanna's Act, local efforts in Portland to bring attention to this crisis, and the need to do more to protect Native women. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-05-05/pdf/CREC-2020-05-05-pt1-PgE427-2.pdf>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, S.R. 606. 116th Congress, 2nd session, Congressional Record p. S2699, June 3, 2020.

Sen. Steve Daines sponsored, and eleven Senators co-sponsored, this resolution, which designated May 5, 2020, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution passed with unanimous consent. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-06-03/pdf/CREC-2020-06-03-pt1-PgS2699-2.pdf>.

Committee on the Judiciary, House Report, *Not Invisible Act of 2020: Report (to Accompany H.R. 2438)*. September 16, 2020.

This report presents the full text of the Not Invisible Act of 2020, in addition to an amendment, an analysis of the bill, and a recommendation to pass the amended bill. Researchers should note that the Not Invisible Act of 2019 (S. 982) ultimately became law on October 10, 2020. The "Background and Need for Legislation" section, which cites both governmental

and non-governmental sources, may still be of interest. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo145262>.

Committee on the Judiciary, House Report, *Savanna's Act: Report (to Accompany H.R. 2733)*, September 16, 2020.

This report presents the full text of Savanna's Act, in addition to an amendment, an analysis of the bill, and a recommendation to pass the amended bill. Note that Savanna's Act (S. 227) ultimately became law on October 10, 2020. The "Background and Need for Legislation" section may still be of interest. It briefly describes Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind's murder and the fetal abduction of her unborn child, the victims for whom the Act is named. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo145270>.

Savanna's Act, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. H4573-H4576, September 21, 2020.

Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon moved to suspend the rules and to pass bill S. 227, Savanna's Act. She summarizes the need for the bill, its contents, and urges passage. Reps. Kelly Armstrong, Richie Torres, and Newhouse all discuss the need for the bill and urge its passage. The bill passed. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-09-21/pdf/CREC-2020-09-21-pt1-PgH4573.pdf>.

Not Invisible Act of 2019, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. H4579-H4581, September 21, 2020.

Rep. Scanlon moved to suspend the rules and to pass bill S. 982, Not Invisible Act of 2019. She summarizes the need for the bill, its contents, and urges passage. Rep. Armstrong yields his time to Rep. Newhouse, who urges support of the bill. The bill passed. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-09-21/pdf/CREC-2020-09-21-pt1-PgH4579.pdf>.

Savanna's Act, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. E867, September 22, 2020.

Rep. Bonamici urges passage of Savanna's Act. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-09-22/pdf/CREC-2020-09-22-pt1-PgE868.pdf>.

Savanna's Act, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. S5775, September 22, 2020.

Sen. Maria Cantwell describes the passage of Savanna's Act through the Senate and House and is awaiting Presidential approval. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-09-22/pdf/CREC-2020-09-22-pt1-PgS5775.pdf>.

Savanna's Act and Not Invisible Act, 116th Congress, 2nd Session, Congressional Record p. E868, September 22, 2020.

Rep. Stanton urges passage of Savanna's Act and Not Invisible Act. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2020-09-22/pdf/CREC-2020-09-22-pt1-PgE868.pdf>.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, S.R. 196. 117th Congress, 1st session, Congressional Record p. S2368, April 29, 2021.

Sen. Daines sponsored, and eight other Senators co-sponsored, this resolution, which designated May 5, 2021, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution passed. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2021-04-29/pdf/CREC-2021-04-29-pt1-PgS2368.pdf>.

10th Anniversary of Ruthie Kindness' Disappearance, 117th Congress, 1st session, Congressional Record p. H4561-H4562, September 21, 2021.

Rep. Newhouse reports the 10th anniversary of Ruthie Kindness' disappearance and asks for any information in solving her case. He uses her case to highlight the continued need to end the murdered and missing indigenous women crisis and to discuss progress made towards that goal. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2021-09-21/pdf/CREC-2021-09-21-pt1-PgH4561-2.pdf>.

Gabby Petito and Femicide, 117th Congress, 1st session, Congressional Record p. S6710, September 27, 2021.

Sen. Dan Sullivan mentions the murder of Gabby Petito and expresses support for her family. He also discusses the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women and progress made on it. He urges further work in ending femicide. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2021-09-27/pdf/CREC-2021-09-27-pt1-PgS6710.pdf>.

Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate Hearing, *Restoring Justice: Addressing Violence in Native Communities through VAWA Title IX Special Jurisdiction*, December 8, 2021.

This hearing focuses on testimony regarding VAWA Title IX special jurisdiction and addressing violence in Native communities. In his opening statement, Sen. Schatz summarizes previous legislative efforts to restore tribal criminal jurisdiction, including the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) reauthorized in 2013, and the importance of such jurisdiction to supporting the public safety of Native communities. Sen. Murkowski further discusses jurisdictional challenges that Alaskan tribes face, and he describes the Alaska Public Safety

Empowerment Pilot Project, a state-level effort to address these challenges. Witness testimony uses research and experience to highlight the success of the special jurisdiction to serving Native communities, as well as the remaining challenges and gaps in tribal jurisdiction to address. Six witnesses are Native American: Wizipan Little Elk Garriot, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs; J. Michael Chavarria, Governor Santa Clara Pueblo; Fawn Sharp, President National Congress of American Indians; Stacie FourStar, Chief Judge Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes; Elizabeth A. Reese, Professor Stanford Law School; and Michelle Demmert, Director Law and Policy Center of Alaska Native Women's Resource Center. Prepared statements and letters in the appendix represent a variety of Tribes and tribal organizations. While this hearing is not specifically focused on missing and murdered indigenous persons, the topic appears in some of the questions and answers. The focus on protecting victims of violence, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking, also bridges into MMIP. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo175531>.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP): Overview of Recent Research, Legislation, and Selected Issues for Congress, Congressional Research Service. January 10, 2022

This report summarizes research, legislation, and “commonly cited barriers to addressing MMIP.” Its coverage of data sources and gaps for indigenous communities and its explanations of federal initiatives and legislation focused on MMIP make it an excellent introduction to this topic. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176521>.

Executive Orders, Proclamations, and Public Laws

Executive Order 13898 of November 26, 2019, *Establishing the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives*, 84 *Federal Register* 66059.

This executive order establishes the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives in response to “ongoing and serious concerns of tribal governments regarding missing and murdered members of American Indian and Alaska Native communities, particularly women and girls.” Section 3 describes the membership of the task force. Section 4 details four primary focuses of the task force, as follows: (1) consulting with tribal governments about this issue, (2) developing protocols and procedures to apply to missing and murdered cases in Native communities, (3) establishing a “multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional team” to review cold cases, and (4) clarify roles, authorities, and jurisdiction of these cases. Section 5 details reporting requirements, and Section

6 specifies the task force terminates in two years unless otherwise directed. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-12-02/pdf/2019-26178.pdf>.

Remarks on Signing an Executive Order Establishing the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives and an Exchange with Reporters, November 26, 2019.

In his remarks, President Trump summarizes the crisis of missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives that prompted his executive order. He describes the launch of Operation Lady Justice, an interagency Task Force, to develop an aggressive, governmentwide strategy to address the crisis. President Trump introduces, and asks for comments from, several Native leaders, as follows: Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band; Myron Lizer, Vice President of the Navajo Nation; Alvin “A.J.” Not Afraid, Chairman of the Crow Nation; Kevin DuPuis, Chairman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; and Roger Smith, Representative of the Fond du Lack Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Attorney General Barr and Secretary Bernhardt also offer comments. *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/DCPD-201900826/pdf/DCPD-201900826.pdf>.

Proclamation 10026 of May 5, 2020, *on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Awareness Day, 2020*, 85 *Federal Register* 27633.

This proclamation recognizes May 5, 2020, as Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Awareness Day. It also summarizes actions taken during President Trump’s administration to address “the epidemic of violence” Native people face. These include actions through the Departments of Justice, Interior, and Health and Human Services, and the executive order forming Operation Lay Justice. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo177018>.

Public Law 116-165, *Savanna’s Act*, October 10, 2020.

Savanna’s Act has four primary goals, all related to cases of missing or murdered Indians. It seeks to clarify responsibilities and to increase coordination and communication between law enforcement agencies across all jurisdictions, to provide Tribal governments with resources and information need to respond, and to increase data collection and sharing. Section 4 outlines steps to improve Tribal access to “crime information databases and criminal justice information systems,” including consultations with Tribal and Indian organizations and specific outreach and education on using the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). Section 5 outlines steps for creating “regionally appropriate guidelines to respond

to cases of missing or murdered Indians” through consultation between Indian Tribes and “relevant partners,” including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and “Tribal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.” Section 6 establishes required statistics and information regarding missing and murdered Indians to be included in the Attorney General’s annual Indian Country Investigations and Prosecutions report. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo146436>.

Public Law 116-166, *Not Invisible Act of 2019*, October 10, 2020.

The Not Invisible Act of 2019 seeks “To increase inter-governmental coordination to identify and combat violent crime within Indian lands and of Indians.” Section 3 designates a coordinator to lead federal efforts related to “the murder of, the trafficking of, and missing Indians” and submitting annual reports and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, House Committee on Natural Resources, and both Senate and House Committees on the Judiciary. Section 4 establishes a two-year, joint commission between the Departments of Interior and Justice to develop and report recommendations “to help combat violent crime against Indians and within Indian lands.” *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo146424>.

Proclamation 10202 of May 4, 2021, *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day, 2021*, 86 *Federal Register* 24479.

This proclamation recognizes May 5, 2021, as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day. It also summarizes actions taken during President Biden’s administration to help Tribal Nations “address the disproportionately high number of missing or murdered Indigenous people” and its causes, including sexual violence, human trafficking, and systemic racism. These include supporting the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization of 2021, implementing requirements of Savanna’s Act and the Not Invisible Act, and actions through the White House Council on Native American Affairs and Department of the Interior. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176468>.

Executive Order 14053 of November 15, 2021, *Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People*, 86 *Federal Register* 64337-64341.

This executive order addresses the underlying causes of “the epidemic of missing or murdered indigenous people” and seeks to create “long-term improvement to public safety for all Native

Americans” through collaborating with Tribal Nations. Section 2 directs the Attorney General, Secretary of Interior, and heads of other appropriate executive departments and agencies to develop a Federal law enforcement strategy, which would prevent and respond to violence against Native Americans within federal jurisdiction and submit a report. Section 3 directs the Attorney General, Secretary of the Interior, and heads of other appropriate agencies to support Tribal and other non-Federal law enforcement efforts to prevent and respond to violence against Native Americans. This would be done through providing guidance, leading practices, and training and technical assistance and lists specific areas to cover. Section 4 directs the Attorney General and the Secretaries of the Interior and Health and Human Services to improve data collection, analysis, and information sharing and to submit reports on the following three areas: (1) developing a strategy for analyzing violent crime and missing persons data involving Native Americans, (2) assessing use of DNA testing and databases to identify missing or murdered indigenous people, and (3) evaluating the adequacy of research and data collection efforts on prevalence and effects of violence against Native Americans. Section 5 directs three efforts towards improving prevention, early intervention, and victim and survivor services, culminating in submitting reports on the following three areas: (1) developing a plan in consultation with Tribal Nations and other groups supporting “indigenous wellbeing” to reduce risk factors for victimization and increase protective factors for Native Americans in numerous areas using community-based and “culturally and linguistically” appropriate strategies, (2) assessing procedures for reporting child abuse and accessing child advocacy center services in several areas, including planned actions to expand access, and (3) evaluating the effectiveness of technical and judicial support services “for Tribes to provide community-based conflict resolution” and “culturally and linguistically appropriate” strategies, including implemented improvements. Section 6 tasks the Departments of Justice, the Interior, Health and Human Services, Energy, and Homeland Security with consulting Tribal Nations and Native American communities on “recommendations regarding implementing sections 2 through 5 of this order.” *Access:* <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-18/pdf/2021-25287.pdf>.

Tasks Forces and Initiatives

The Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, 2019-2021.

Established in President Trump’s Executive Order 13898, this task force, also known as *Operation Lady Justice*, includes members from the Departments of Justice, Interior, Health and

Human Services, Homeland Security, and Housing and Urban Development. The task force aimed to “address the legitimate concerns of American Indian and Alaska Native communities regarding missing and murdered people.” Recordings and transcripts of Tribal consultations performed remotely, reports, data, and case information can be accessed via the task force’s website. The task force sunset in 2021. *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176179>.

The Not Invisible Act Commission, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, 2020-present.

Established in The Not Invisible Act of 2019, this multi-agency advisory group will be comprised of twenty-eight members: nine federal and nineteen non-federal representatives. Membership will include “law enforcement, Tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, and most importantly—survivors.” The commission will make recommendations for improving intergovernmental coordination and establishing best practices for “combatting violent crime against Indians within Indian lands, including missing persons, murder, and human trafficking.”

As of this writing, the commission seeks federal and non-federal membership nominations. *Access:* <https://www.bia.gov/service/not-invisible-act-commission>.

Missing and Murdered Unit (MMU), Office of Justice Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, 2021-present.

The Missing and Murdered Unit (MMU) supports cross-departmental and interagency work, including reviewing unsolved cases, collaborating on active missing and murdered investigations, and collaborating with efforts of other agencies. It was created to support initiatives of the Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives.¹⁴ *Access:* <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176245>.

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Notes

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- Violence, Oversight Hearing*, 116th Cong., 1st sess., March 14, 2019, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo120690>.
2. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, *Addressing the Need for Victim Services in Indian Country, Hearings*, 114th Cong., 1st sess., June 10, 2015, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo62362>.
 3. Andre B. Rosay, *Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men : 2010 Findings From the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, National Institute of Justice Research Report, no. NCJ 249736, 2016, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo68678>.
 4. Designating May 5, 2017, as the “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls,” S.R. 514. 114th Cong., 2nd Sess., 162 Cong. Rec. S4651 (June 28, 2016), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2016-06-28/pdf/CREC-2016-06-28-pt1-PgS4651-2.pdf>; Expressing support for Designation of May 5, 2017, as “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls,” H.R. 807, 114th Cong., 2nd Sess., (2016), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114hres807ih/pdf/BILLS-114hres807ih.pdf>.
 5. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, S. 1870, S. 1953, and S. 1942, Hearing, 115th Cong., 1st sess., October 25, 2017, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo110660>.
 6. Savanna’s Act, P. L. 116-165, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo146436>.
 7. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, *Missing and Murdered: Confronting the Silent Crisis in Indian Country, Hearings*, 115th Cong., 2nd sess., December 12, 2018, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo123064>; Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples of the United States, *Unmasking the Hidden Crisis*; House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States, Reviewing the Trump Administration’s Approach to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW) Crisis, Oversight Hearing, 116th Cong., 1st sess., September 11, 2019, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo131293>.
 8. Exec. Order No. 13898, 84 Fed. Reg. 66059 (Nov. 26, 2019), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-12-02/pdf/2019-26178.pdf>.
 9. Proclamation No. 10026, 85 Fed. Reg. 27633 (May 5, 2020), <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo177018>.
 10. Savanna’s Act; Not Invisible Act of 2019, P. L. 116-166, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo146424>.
 11. Proclamation No. 10202, 86 Fed. Reg. 24479 (May 4, 2021), <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176468>.
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 13. US Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP): Overview of Recent Research, Legislation, and Selected Issues for Congress*, by Emily J. Hansen, R47010, 2022, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo176521>.
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