

**REVIEWING THE TRUMP ADMINIS-  
TRATION'S APPROACH TO THE  
MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGE-  
NOUS WOMEN (MMIW) CRISIS**

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**OVERSIGHT HEARING**

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE  
UNITED STATES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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**OVERSIGHT HEARING ON REVIEWING THE  
TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH TO  
THE MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS  
WOMEN (MMIW) CRISIS**

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**Wednesday, September 11, 2019  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Washington, DC**

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The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:09 a.m., in room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Ruben Gallego [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Gallego, San Nicolas, Haaland, Case, Grijalva, and Cook.

Mr. GALLEGO. The Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States will now come to order. The Subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the Trump administration's approach to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) crisis.

Under Committee Rule 4(f), any oral opening statements at hearings are limited to the Chair and Ranking Minority Member. This will allow us to hear from our witnesses sooner and help Members keep to their schedules. I ask unanimous consent that all other Members' opening statements be made part of the hearing record if they are submitted to the Clerk by 5 p.m. today or the close of the hearing, whichever comes first.

Hearing no objection, so ordered.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. RUBEN GALLEGO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARIZONA**

Mr. GALLEGO. Good morning to you all. Today, we will be hearing directly from the Trump administration about the steps it is taking to confront the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW). Earlier this year, the Subcommittee held a hearing where we heard from Native women who have witnessed this crisis firsthand and who are working on the ground to address it.

I want to thank the Ranking Member for agreeing to look further into this issue in a bipartisan manner. I think I speak for both of us when I say how important it is to keep this issue in the spotlight.

Before we begin today's hearing, I want to remind everyone why we are here. During our March MMIW hearing, we heard their names: Ashley Loring HeavyRunner, Mackenzie Howard, Ashlynn Mike, and Savanna Greywind. They are Native women and girls who went missing or were killed and whose cases received shamefully negligent responses from Federal and state agencies.

Unfortunately, these women were not alone and their cases are not unique. One study found that 1.5 million American Indian and Alaska Native women experience violence in their lifetime. On reservations, American Indian and Alaska Native women experience murder rates 10 times the national average. And, as we learned at our hearing earlier this year, these numbers are likely under-reported.

We also know that state, local, and Federal coordination and response to cases of violence against Indigenous communities is severely inadequate. In fact, Federal enforcement has been so notoriously bad that some predators specifically target Native communities to avoid punishment. This pattern is sickening.

These high rates of violence are not just a crisis affecting Indian Country. It is a national disgrace that demands national action and has not appeared to be a high priority for this Administration. We, in Congress, are committed to making change through VAWA, Savanna's Act, and other legislation. But we need to know we have a partner in the Administration in working to curb the violence.

Listening sessions are not enough. We need to know what is being done to streamline protocols, eliminate lag time, improve databases, and combat apathy in our justice system when Indigenous people go missing. These are our brothers and sisters whom we have a responsibility to protect.

I want to remind our witnesses here that the policies we discuss today have a direct impact on the lives of folks on the ground, for better or worse. I expect to hear about the tangible solutions this Administration is pursuing to end the cycle of violence for Indigenous women in this country. Anything less is unacceptable.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gallego follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. RUBEN GALLEGO, CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE FOR  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES

Good morning to you all.

Today, we will be hearing directly from the Trump administration about steps it is taking to confront the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Earlier this year, this Subcommittee held a hearing where we heard from Native women who have witnessed this crisis firsthand, and who are working on the ground to address it.

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Mr. GALLEGO. I would now like to recognize Ranking Member Cook for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. PAUL COOK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Mr. COOK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today's hearing is the second part of the discussion this Subcommittee began in March of this year. At that hearing, the Subcommittee received testimony detailing the painful situation that has plagued Native communities for far too long.

Crime and violence, tragically, are not a new phenomenon in Indian Country. Four out of five Native women are affected by violence, with the U.S. Department of Justice finding that American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average. That is scary. American Indians are victims of violent crimes at a higher rate than the general population, which has led to the Department of Justice emphasizing the importance of law enforcement in Indian Country.

In April, the House of Representatives passed the Violence Against Women Act, which included many key provisions to protect Native American women, such as improving tribal access to Federal crime information databases, and reaffirming tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators of violence against women. I am looking forward to these provisions becoming law.

It is so important that we all work together to address these horrific crimes and find a way to end this unprecedented violence against Native women.

I am pleased we have some representatives from the Administration here today. I am looking forward to hearing what they are doing to combat the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cook follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. PAUL COOK, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES

Thank you, Chairman Gallego.

Today's hearing is the second part of the discussion this Subcommittee began in March of this year. At that hearing, the Subcommittee received testimony detailing a painful situation that has plagued Native communities for too long.

Crime and violence, tragically, are not a new phenomenon in Indian Country. Four out of five Native women are affected by violence, with the U.S. Department of Justice finding that American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average. American Indians are victims of violent crimes at a higher rate than the general population, which has led to the Department of Justice emphasizing the importance of law enforcement in Indian Country.

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I am pleased that we have some representatives from the Administration here today and I am looking forward to hearing what they are doing to combat the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Ranking Member Cook.

Before we proceed to witness testimony, during our first hearing, our tribal advocates had a replica of the skirt that you see near our dais. It was made by a Native woman Agnes Woodward, originally from Canada, and married to Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation. She makes these locally to bring awareness for the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls. Her aunt is among the missing and murdered Indigenous women, and Native women wear the skirts to remember their sisters. Please, if you would like to just observe that we have that.

I would also like to give an opportunity to the Chairman of the Committee of Natural Resources, Congressman Grijalva, for any opening statement.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. But I think your statement and the statement of the Ranking Member, and the bipartisan approach to accountability with regard to this issue, is enough said. So, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Now, I would like to transition to our panel of expert witnesses for today. Let me remind the witnesses that under our Committee Rules, oral statements are limited to 5 minutes. But you may submit a longer statement for the record, if you choose.

When you begin, the lights on the witness table will turn green. After 4 minutes, the yellow light will come on. Your time will have expired when the red light comes on, and I will ask you to please wrap up your statement. I will also allow the entire panel to testify before we question the witnesses.

The Chair now recognizes the Honorable Jeannie Hovland, the Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. JEANNIE HOVLAND, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS (ANA), U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you. Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and esteemed members of the House Subcommittee for Indigenous People of the United States, it is my honor to be before you today on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

My name is Jeannie Hovland, and I serve as Commissioner for the Administration of Native Americans. I am also a proud member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe located in South Dakota.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide is the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women between 10 and 24 years of age, and the fifth leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age. And more than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women, or about 84 percent, have experienced violence in their lifetime, as reported by the National Institute of Justice.

We also know from research that children who witness domestic violence suffer long-term consequences, including changes to their mental and physical development, possibly resulting in worse health outcomes, leading to learning disorders and a continuation of a cycle of violence over generations. These statistics are staggering and expose the deep impact violence has in the lives of Native women, families, and their communities.

In July, President Bordeaux of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, located in South Dakota, issued a statement to his community that reads in part:

“We have had a number of tragic deaths in the past 10 days. They were almost exclusively children. I know that we all grieve with the families and extend our condolences and prayers for comfort for the families impacted by these tragedies. No parent should have to bury their children.

It has become obvious that it is a dangerous time for our people. It is especially true for our young people and young adults, who face many safety threats that were unheard of even 15 or 20 years ago. We now find ourselves in a situation where we need to be more vigilant about protecting the up and coming generation.”

Not surprisingly, what we heard from the Urban Indian Organizations is the resources and collaborations needed to address these issues include prevention programs, housing, data, and technical assistance and capacity-building to form strong partnerships locally to address the multiple service needs of their most vulnerable clients.

We have also heard from tribal leaders, service providers, and others about the importance of engaging with tribal community members to lead efforts in developing and implementing solutions.

I am happy to share that HHS is leading efforts on primary prevention, intervention, recovery, and healing. Our efforts include a whole-family approach that connects families to services that support the physical, mental, and spiritual health and well-being of individuals and families.

Within ACF, programs such as the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting; Head Start; Runaway and Homeless Youth; Family Violence Prevention and Services; and Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood are incorporating new practices to respond to trauma and domestic violence, raising awareness of the issue, and working to heal victims and their families. HHS has also created and funded resources that Native communities can access to serve populations vulnerable to human trafficking and MMIW.

I have sought ways to be a visible advocate on behalf of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Indigenous communities through re-establishing and chairing the Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs to enhance collaboration across HHS, participating in work groups such as the White House Tribal Affairs Week Group, a Federal Interagency Working Group on Women and Trauma, and an Interagency Ad Hoc Working Group, and partnering with the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice.

I recently joined Assistant Secretary Tara Sweeney and other Federal and tribal representatives at a listening session focused on cold cases, violent crimes, human trafficking, and MMIW.

In closing, Tribal Nations and Native communities in urban areas are ready to act to address MMIW, and HHS is ready to partner with them. We are thankful for the attention you are bringing to missing and murdered Indigenous peoples and the support of the Subcommittee in helping address this crisis.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hovland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEANNIE HOVLAND, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### INTRODUCTION

Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and esteemed members of the House Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States, it is my honor to testify before you on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) concerning the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW) and girls. My name is Jeannie Hovland and I serve as the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). I am a proud member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe located in South Dakota. Before my appointment, I served as Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior (DOI) and, prior to joining the Administration, I worked for nearly 13 years on Native American issues for Senator John Thune of South Dakota.

Our approach to addressing MMIW issues has been to engage with our stakeholders, partner with our sister agencies, and promote available resources while creating new opportunities to meet identified gaps. Since my confirmation, I have worked to improve collaboration within HHS and across the Federal interagency with respect to issues concerning Native communities. In particular, I re-established and chair the Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs (ICNAA). This council, initially established under the Native Americans Programs Act, was designed to enhance collaboration across the HHS operating divisions when addressing policy and budget issues that affect Native Americans. The ICNAA has met three times and two of our focus areas include human trafficking and MMIW. Opioids and substance use disorders have had a grave impact on our Nation, including Native communities, and represents another area of focus for the ICNAA.

#### BACKGROUND

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), homicide is the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women between 10 and 24 years of age, and the fifth leading cause of death for AI/AN women between 25 and 34 years of age.<sup>1</sup> Data from U.S. crime reports indicate that nearly half of female homicide victims in the United States are killed by a

<sup>1</sup>Leading Causes of Death (LCOD) by Age Group, American Indian/Alaska Native Females-United States, 2013 and 2014. Numbers for 2015 vary slightly for these age bands but remain one of the leading causes of death for these ages. Accessed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/women/lcod/index.htm>.

current or former male intimate partner.<sup>2</sup> According to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), more than four in five AI/AN women, or about 84 percent, have experienced violence in their lifetime.<sup>3</sup> These statistics are staggering and expose the deep impact violence has in the lives of Native women, families, and communities.

I recently participated in the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Violence Against Women tribal consultation where a tribal leader stated that often the first responders to a domestic violence scene are the children in the home. We know from research that children who witness domestic violence suffer long-term consequences including changes to their mental and physical development, possibly resulting in worse health outcomes, learning disorders, and continuation of a cycle of violence over generations.<sup>4</sup> Further, the long-term effects of adverse childhood events is that they create emotional scars that are reopened when people are exposed to traumas in adulthood leading to adult post-traumatic stress disorder.

Recently, I attended HHS Regional Consultations across the Nation asking what HHS can do to address human trafficking and MMIW, and have continually heard that tribes do not want just more studies on this issue but also want action. In July, President Bordeaux of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe located in South Dakota issued a statement to his community that reads in part:

*"We have had a number of tragic deaths in the past 10 days. They were almost exclusively children. I know that we all grieve with the families and extend our condolences and prayers for comfort for the families impacted by these tragedies. No parent should have to bury their children.*

*It has become obvious that it is a dangerous time for our people. It is especially true of our young people and our young adults, who face many safety threats that were unheard of even 15 or 20 years ago. We now find ourselves in a situation where we need to be more vigilant about protecting the up and coming generation. There are simply too many threats to their safety. Indian Country's struggles with alcohol, meth and opioids are well documented."*

Unfortunately what is happening in Rosebud is happening in many other tribal communities as well. This is why a multi-agency approach is vital to making any kind of impact on these issues all of which are tied together.

On July 18, 2019, to ensure that Native Americans living in urban settings are included in strategies to address trafficking and MMIW, I co-hosted a virtual conference with urban Indian organizations and the National Council of Urban Indian Health to discuss MMIW. Twelve urban Indian organizations participated, as well as the DOJ, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and my HHS colleagues from the Indian Health Service (IHS). Not surprisingly, what we heard from the urban Indian organizations is that the resources and collaborations needed to address these issues include prevention programs, housing, data, and technical assistance and capacity building to form strong partnerships locally to address the multiple service needs of their most vulnerable clients.

#### PRIMARY PREVENTION

I am happy to share that HHS is leading efforts on primary prevention, intervention, recovery, and healing. Our efforts include a whole family approach that connects families to services that support the physical, mental, and spiritual health and well-being of individuals and families. Within ACF, programs such as the Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), Head Start, Runaway and Homeless Youth, Family Violence Prevention and Services, and Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood are incorporating new practices to respond to trauma and domestic violence, raising awareness of the issue, and working to heal victims and their families.

<sup>2</sup>Cooper, A., & Smith, E.L. (2011). Homicide trends in the United States, 1980–2008. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 236018. Petrosky, E., et al. (2017). Racial and Ethnic Differences in Homicides of Adult Women and the Role of Intimate Partner Violence—United States, 2003–2014. MMWR. Morbidity and mortality weekly report, 66(28), 741–746. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm6628a1.

<sup>3</sup>National Institute of Justice. Five Things About Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-violence-against-american-indian-and-alaska-native-women-and-men>.

<sup>4</sup>Child-Witnessed Domestic Violence and its Adverse Effects on Brain Development: A Call for Societal Self-Examination and Awareness, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4193214/>; Domestic Violence and the Child Welfare System, <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/domestic-violence.pdf>.

For example, the Tribal MIECHV program supports the development of happy, healthy, and successful AI/AN children and families through a coordinated home visiting strategy that addresses critical maternal and child health, development, early learning, family support, and child abuse and neglect prevention needs. Tribal MIECHV conducted 72,326 home visits between 2012 and 2017 and in 2017, the program served 3,453 parents and children. In Maricopa County, Arizona, Native Health, one of our Tribal MIECHV grantees, is working to enable urban AI/AN enrolled in the program to experience increased safety through prevention of child abuse and neglect and domestic violence. This comprehensive services program provides the full range of physical and mental health medical services to participants including misdemeanor domestic violence offender treatment services.

The importance of mental health services in these communities that bear the weight of historic and contemporary trauma cannot be understated. Programs with a trauma-informed approach can help to establish competent, compassionate, and culturally appropriate responses. The Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda was created by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the request of tribal leaders and examines the impact of trauma on current mental health outcomes. In partnership with Futures Without Violence, the Head Start program has developed trainings for grantees on trauma informed care, how to recognize and respond to disclosures about domestic violence, and how to partner with community domestic violence programs to address the issue.

I have heard from tribal leaders, service providers, and others about the importance of engaging with tribal community members to lead efforts in developing and implementing solutions. As President Bordeaux stated, it is a dangerous time for our youth. Toward this end, I am working to connect the tribal youth directly with Federal leaders—to hear about their ideas and concerns and to empower them to become change agents in their communities. I strongly believe that youth need to be at the table when addressing these important issues. In July, I hosted the first-ever ICNAA Native Youth Town Hall in Albuquerque, New Mexico. At this town hall, leadership from SAMHSA, CDC, IHS, the ACF Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), and I heard from over 100 Native youth from across the United States, including Guam, Saipan, and American Samoa. We provided these youth a number of resources, including our Native Youth Toolkit on Human Trafficking. Shortly after the town hall, I received an e-mail from youth leaders asking if they could meet regularly with HHS leadership and work with us to address mental health and wellness issues including physical activity, nutrition, substance abuse, human trafficking, and MMIW. We held our first follow-up call a few weeks ago.

#### PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING RESOURCES

HHS has created and funded resources that Native communities can access to serve populations vulnerable to human trafficking and MMIW. These populations include foster children; runaway and homeless youth; victims of domestic violence and children who witness it; homeless adults; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals; individuals with mental disabilities; and those struggling with substance abuse or addiction.

ACF's Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) formula grant is non-competitive and is mandated to allocate 10 percent of its appropriation to tribes and tribal organizations in an effort to increase public awareness and support services for victims of family, domestic, or dating violence. This funding is typically used to pay for domestic violence prevention advocates who can assist victims with creating a safety plan as well as crisis intervention, such as an emergency shelter. FVPSA also provides discretionary funds for several resources specific to tribes, such as the StrongHearts Native Helpline, the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC), and the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC).

The StrongHearts Native Helpline is a confidential and anonymous helpline for Native peoples affected by domestic and dating violence, as well as responds to calls from victims of human trafficking, as needed. StrongHearts is currently a collaborative project of The National Domestic Violence Hotline and NIWRC whose legal counsel, Mary Kathryn Nagle, testified before you on the MMIW issue this past March. In operation for just over 2 years, StrongHearts has experienced an increase in call volume since expanding its service hours, demonstrating that there is significant demand for culturally specific services.

The NIWRC serves as the National Indian Resource Center Addressing Domestic Violence focused on providing national leadership to end gender-based violence through educational resources, training and technical assistance, and policy to enhance the capacity of tribes and tribal organizations. They have also developed

materials to bring awareness and resources to Native communities on the issue of MMIW including a toolkit that can be accessed online.

The AKNWRC serves Alaska's 229 federally recognized tribes, regional corporations, and tribal consortia as a statewide resource focused on strengthening local tribal responses to domestic and gender-based violence. They are also meeting on MMIW in their communities to discuss and develop a plan for further outreach about this crisis in the Alaska Native communities.

Recently on the matter of MMIW, the Family Violence Prevention and Services program collaborated with NIWRC, StrongHearts, and AKNWRC to raise the visibility of this issue and growing epidemic at its 2019 Tribal Grantee Meeting, held August 13–15, 2019 in Seattle, Washington. Speakers from the NIJ, in partnership with the University of North Texas Health Science Center, presented on NamUs, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System. NamUs is a centralized database and resource center that assists law enforcement, medical professionals, and public users in resolving cases of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons. Also, a member of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Community Domestic Violence Advocacy Program presented on this issue from the perspective of a surviving family member. Risk factors, data, challenges, and policy changes related to MMIW, as well as what can be done as community members and individuals, were shared with meeting attendees.

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) is another HHS resource that has pledged increasing outreach to AI/AN communities. The NRS supports and serves youth in crisis, runaway youth, and youth experiencing homelessness and their families. The NRS provides services such as free bus tickets home, and a way to leave messages for family and loved ones, if the youth feel that they are not safe contacting them directly. They also offer prevention resources to help minimize running away incidents among vulnerable youth, including resources tailored for Native American youth.

#### FRONTLINE PROVIDERS

Health care providers are often the first line of defense in identifying cases of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, teen dating violence, and human trafficking. Ensuring these providers are adequately trained to identify and address these cases is an important step in intervention. Through training efforts such as the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness Program administered by OTIP, providers learn how to identify cases of human trafficking. They study clinical contexts using trauma informed and culturally appropriate approaches. Recognizing the importance of culture, ANA has partnered with OTIP to develop a SOAR curriculum for Native communities. This training examines historic factors that contribute to the trafficking of Native populations, identifies indicators, and describes what human trafficking looks like in Native communities. Moreover, it provides existing resources for Native populations and service providers working on this issue and describes methods for honoring cultural practices while providing supportive services to individuals who have experienced human trafficking. We also created an online Native Youth Toolkit on Human Trafficking that is designed to raise awareness and prevent this issue through education and includes tips on how to stay safe.

In July, the CDC and IHS partnered on a National Conference on American Indian/Alaska Native Injury and Violence Prevention. The conference brought together tribal and Federal stakeholders to discuss the links between violence and injury and how to intervene in instances of intimate partner violence (IPV). The CDC offers a technical package of programs, policies, and practices to stop violence before it starts.<sup>5</sup> IHS regularly provides screening on IPV during appointments.

Other important programs that aim to be a means of primary prevention include ACF's Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grant programs. These are part of HHS's community-based efforts to promote strong, healthy family formation and maintenance, responsible fatherhood and parenting. Grants such as these help strengthen healthy forms of relationship and parenting and can serve as a preventative measure against intimate partner violence.

#### ANA APPROACH

ANA funding is unique in the flexibility it provides to tailor projects to the needs of the community it is serving. Because of this, ANA funding can be used to address MMIW in a myriad of ways. This could include funding of training programs or helping tribes create codes and collect data for their response to disappearances or

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv-technicalpackages.pdf>.

violence when they occur. ANA funding also prioritizes the preservation of Native cultures and languages which have been shown to stand as a strong protective and preventative factor. The Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center recently completed a project Oshki Wayeshkad (New Beginnings) that illustrates how communities use ANA funds. This project provided emotional, cultural, and life skills coaching to women age 16 to 21, and during the course of the project, staff helped a woman living with an abusing partner move, find employment, and attend dialysis and medical appointments.

In addition to promoting our funding opportunities, I seek ways to be "a visible advocate" on behalf of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Indigenous communities. In order to strengthen my advocacy, I have been active in workgroups that are breaking down silos to address issues of great concern to tribes and Native communities. These include a White House Tribal Affairs Work Group, which has highlighted MMIW as well as substance abuse and economic development as priorities, a Federal Interagency Working Group on Women and Trauma, and an Interagency Ad Hoc Working Group on AI/AN trafficking. I have also formed partnerships with the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice focused on improving public safety. I recently joined the DOI Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Tara Sweeney, and other Federal and tribal representatives at a listening session focused on cold cases, violent crimes, human trafficking, and MMIW.

We will be following up on our consultations and listening sessions with additional in-person roundtables with legislators and Federal partners focused on sharing data and formulating recommendations for victim protections. ANA has been developing a relationship with tribal epidemiology centers in cities across the country to have dialogue on MMIW data collection, the lack of which is problematic in identifying the scope of the problem.

Furthermore, ANA recently partnered with OTIP to establish the first-ever class of the Human Trafficking Leadership Academy where Native survivors of human trafficking and frontline professionals will have the opportunity to participate in monthly leadership training over a 6-month period while examining cultural protective factors aimed at prevention of human trafficking of Native youth. This class is scheduled to begin in October and we look forward to their recommendations in the spring.

#### CONCLUSION

Tribal nations and Native communities in urban areas are ready to act to address MMIW and HHS is ready to partner with them. We are thankful for the attention you are bringing to MMIW and the support of this Subcommittee in helping address this crisis.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO COMMISSIONER HOVLAND, ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### Question Submitted by Rep. Gallego

*Question 1. As apparent in your testimony, ANA offers a couple of readily-accessible resources to Native communities on the topic of MMIW, such as the online Native Youth Toolkit on Human Trafficking.*

*1a. How does ANA conduct outreach to relevant communities and organizations so that they know about these resources?*

Answer. ANA developed the toolkit in partnership with our Administration for Children & Families (ACF) colleagues, including the Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP). This toolkit was informed by focus groups of tribal youth, Federal grantees, and Native Americans who have experienced sex and labor trafficking.

ACF is working to distribute this toolkit and other resources in multiple ways. ANA and OTIP have printed and distributed hundreds of copies to Native youth, community members, and tribal leaders during workshops, consultations, listening sessions, and other events throughout the United States and Pacific Islands, such as our Native Youth Town Hall in Albuquerque, NM this past July. ACF has shared this toolkit online via our own social media platforms and those of our partners (where the toolkit has received thousands of "likes", shares, and clicks), blast e-mails, and on our website, where it has received more than 3,000 views.

As another example, this past summer ANA and OTIP worked with the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY), through the National Human Trafficking Training & Technical Assistance Center, to train Native youth leaders on human trafficking. As a follow up, CNAY is collaborating with these leaders to support their efforts to raise awareness in their communities using the Native Youth Toolkit on trafficking and soliciting ideas and input on how culture may be a protective factor in preventing trafficking among Native youth. The youth will work with CNAY remotely to create individual multi-media products that share their findings, which will inform the next cohort of our Human Trafficking Leadership Academy (HTLA).

*1b. Is ANA in the process of creating additional publicly-available resources for Native victims or organizations?*

Answer. ANA is working with OTIP, the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center, and external partners to develop *SOAR for Native Communities* (Stop, Observe, Ask, Respond), under the SOAR to Health and Wellness Program.

This training was borne out of OTIP's partnership with ANA. ANA felt there was a need for a training that spoke to not only American Indians and Alaska Natives, but also Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders on human trafficking from a public health framework and incorporated cultural considerations and trauma-informed care. ANA and OTIP worked with subject matter experts with both professional and lived experience from the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC), Indian Health Service, and Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative to develop the training content. ANA and OTIP also had the training content externally reviewed by staff with the Tribal Law and Policy Institute, the American Indian Center of Chicago, National Council on Urban Indian Health, and members of the ACF Tribal Advisory Committee over the last year to ensure we were inclusive for urban Native communities.

Our objectives for this training include:

- Describe historic factors that contribute to the trafficking (both labor and sex trafficking) of Indigenous populations
- Describe trafficking in Native communities
- Identify indicators of trafficking in Native communities
- Describe trafficking resources relevant to Native populations
- Describe methods for honoring cultural practices while providing support to individuals who have experienced trafficking
- Explain ways to strengthen cross-jurisdictional collaborations to build comprehensive responses to trafficking in Native communities

Once finalized, ACF plans to have it freely available through our SOAR Online Learning Management System as well as available for in-person delivery upon request through our technical assistance provider. ACF will employ a variety of methods to promote this training as a resource.

#### **Question Submitted by Rep. Grijalva**

*Question 1. You highlight the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) Family Violence Prevention and Services Act and the help that it has been in establishing vital victim services and awareness programs for tribal communities. Because 10 percent of the Act's appropriations go directly to tribes and to tribal organizations, such programs are reliant on the Act's annual funding.*

*1a. Exactly how much money was available to tribes and tribal organizations this fiscal year?*

Answer. The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is statutorily mandated to support Native American Tribes (including Alaska Native Villages) and tribal organizations through an allocation of not less than 10 percent of the total appropriation (less amounts reserved under Section 312). The statutory purpose of these grants is to: (1) assist tribes in efforts to increase public awareness about, and primary and secondary prevention of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence; and (2) assist tribes in efforts to provide immediate shelter and supportive services for victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence, and their dependents. The allocation for tribes in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 is \$15,170,059.

The FY 2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act included \$5,000,000 in appropriations to the FVPSA Program, for the purposes of supporting Native American Tribes

and tribal organizations. With this increase, the total amount allocated to tribes in FY 2019 is approximately \$20,170,059.

*1b. What will the funding look like next year?*

Answer. The Family Violence Prevention and Services/Domestic Violence Shelter and Supportive Services/Grants to Native American Tribes (including Alaska Native Villages) and tribal organizations applications are due February 28, 2020. The 2020 President's Budget provided level funding for the program, and ACF looks forward to working with Congress throughout the appropriations process.

*1c. In your experience, has there been an expressed need for greater funding?*

Answer. For the last 2 fiscal years, Congress has provided an additional \$5,000,000 in appropriations specifically for grants to tribes and tribal organizations. In FY 2018 and 2019, this increase enabled the FVPSA Program to increase tribal grant awards (83 of 142) from approximately \$17,000 to approximately \$46,000. The 2020 President's Budget provided level funding for the program, and ACF looks forward to working with Congress throughout the appropriations process.

### **Questions Submitted by Rep. Haaland**

*Question 1. You mentioned that HHS is leading the Federal efforts on primary prevention, intervention, recovery, and healing as they pertain to the MMIW crisis.*

*1a. Are other Federal agencies helping HHS to fulfill this mission?*

Answer. Yes. Within HHS, the primary vehicle for coordinating Native American issues across the department is the HHS Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs (ICNAA), which has identified Human Trafficking/Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as one of its top priorities. Currently, the ICNAA is identifying a series of immediate, medium, and long-term outcomes to work toward addressing. This work is part of the continuing collaboration with offices at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of the Interior to ensure that health and human services, as well as victim services, are thought about holistically with regards to MMIW.

*1b. If they aren't currently, how could other agencies collaborate with HHS to implement programming related to MMIW?*

Answer. HHS, led by ANA, is engaging in listening sessions, consultations, and other events across the Federal Government to help increase awareness, share resources, and learn from communities in order to develop responses to the issues around data and programming. HHS continues to reach out to other Federal agencies to include them in these critical conversations.

*Question 2. You highlight the recent establishment of the Human Trafficking Leadership Academy, where Native survivors of human trafficking and frontline professionals are given the opportunity to participate in monthly leadership training.*

*2a. Can you detail how this leadership academy was created (i.e. who was involved/consulted, was it a Native-driven community effort, etc.)?*

Answer. This particular leadership academy included input and involvement from Native American perspectives. The project question for the HTLA Cohort 5, which examines culture as a protective factor for Native youth, was developed through input over time with the ACF Tribal Advisory Committee, a group of 26 tribal leaders (13 primary and 13 alternates) from across the country and through other tribal listening sessions held at various conferences and with discussions with Native American associations like the National Indian Health Board, the California Rural Indian Health Board and at ACF tribal consultation. It was further refined in partnership with the Center for Native American Youth, a national organization focused on Native Youth empowerment as well as Native American human trafficking survivors. This cohort received more than 100 applications, the majority of them from individuals who identify as Native American, which speaks to the interest in these opportunities.

The HTLA is committed to developing and expanding survivor-informed services while also providing leadership development opportunities to survivor leaders and related professionals. Fellows work collaboratively to provide substantive recommendations that will inform research, policies, and programs that improve awareness, understanding, and assistance to survivors of human trafficking or those at risk of human trafficking.



The leadership training provided at monthly seminars over the course of 4 to 6 months is applicable to the fellows' current work and helps them grow in their chosen career. As they collaborate through a combination of in-person and virtual work, they also establish a trusted network among all the fellows that could last a lifetime. The final seminar includes a graduation ceremony and a presentation to Federal stakeholders on findings and recommendations related to the project question.

*2b. Do you think replicating such a process is necessary in creating lasting and effective victim services programs in Indian Country?*

Answer. ACF will have a better sense of the effectiveness of this process once we have completed the HTLA Cohort 5 in the spring of 2020. However, we do know that survivor-informed solutions are likely to resonate with the target audience and that programs and services in Indian Country must be tailored to the specific context and resources available in those specific communities.

*Question 3. Last month, staff members from the NIWRC, the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC), and the StrongHearts Native Helpline gathered in Seattle at a Tribal Grantee Meeting to discuss the MMIW crisis.*

*3a. Does your agency currently offer similar annual conferences or strategic planning meetings for tribal programs funded under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act?*

Answer. The biennial FVPSA Tribal Grantee meeting was held August 12 through 16, 2019 in Seattle. The 2½ day meeting provided training, technical assistance, and mentoring for FVPSA-funded tribes and tribal organizations. The in-person meeting allowed for in-depth technical assistance focused on administrative and programmatic grant implementation. Attendees shared and heard from each other on promising practices and barriers to providing services that are unique to their communities, experiences, and programs. Listening sessions, facilitated dialogue, and presentations were utilized as mechanisms for training. NIWRC, AKNWRC, and StrongHearts Native Helpline representatives were in attendance at this meeting and collaborated with the FVPSA Program to raise the visibility of MMIW issues and the growing crisis. Speakers from the DOJ National Institute of Justice, in partnership with the University of North Texas Health Science Center, presented on NamUs, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System. NamUs is a centralized database and resource center that assists law enforcement, medical professionals, and public users in resolving cases of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons. Also, a member of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Community Domestic Violence Advocacy Program presented on this issue from the perspective of a surviving family member. Risk factors, data, challenges, and policy changes related to MMIW, as well as strategies for community members and individuals, were shared with meeting attendees.

In 2020, ACF will host a Native American Grantee meeting in February 2020 in Arlington, VA. ACF intends to host discussion on MMIW at the event and share resources. The FVPSA Program plans to hold a smaller peer-to-peer tribal grantee meeting tentatively scheduled for early March 2020.

*3b. Is HHS considering the proposal of an annual summit on the topic of MMIW amongst its many victim support services programs?*

Answer. HHS cannot predict whether funding availability in outlying years would permit it (or its components) to hold an annual summit. However, ACF is seeking to integrate the topic into its various meetings and conferences whenever possible. The FVPSA Program will continue to include discussions of MMIW as part of its grantee meetings, but it currently does not have the funding to implement a separate summit, with 97.5 percent of FVPSA funding required to be allocated for grant awards and 2.5 percent allocated for program administration.

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Mr. GALLEG0. Thank you, Commissioner.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Charles Addington, the Deputy Bureau Director for the Office of Justice Services at the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**STATEMENT OF CHARLES ADDINGTON, DEPUTY BUREAU DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF JUSTICE SERVICES, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. ADDINGTON. Good morning, Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Charles Addington, and I am the Deputy Bureau Director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services at the Department of the Interior. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Department regarding the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women crisis confronting American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The Department has made a priority to address this crisis head-on. My testimony will reflect the current work that the Department is doing.

With Native Americans facing alarming levels of violence across the country, more can be done to support meaningful efforts to address these high crime rates in Indian Country. The Violence Against Women Act and the Tribal Law and Order Act have both helped bring attention to the high rate of violence and the gaps in crime trends in Indian Country.

However, significant gaps in data that exacerbate the crisis of missing and murdered Native Americans remain. These data gaps impact how law enforcement officials handle or follow up on these cases. These challenges are present across multiple sectors, but are particularly problematic in the context of criminal justice, in which Federal, state, tribal, and local governments share responsibilities.

It is important to continue efforts to build accurate data and provide Congress, the public, and most importantly, the tribes with the information needed to identify and analyze the criminal justice needs in Indian Country to better address the crisis.

Since the FBI Uniformed Crime Report does not collect missing person data, the BIA Office of Justice Services has partnered with the DOJ's Missing and Unidentified Persons system, named NamUs, a program of the National Institute of Justice to create new data fields in their system to specifically capture tribal affiliation data. The new data fields were implemented and went live in February 2019. This additional data will assist law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions with tracking and investigating missing persons throughout Indian Country.

The BIA Office of Justice Services has also begun efforts to raise awareness and provide additional training to Indian Country law enforcement personnel. The BIA Indian Police Academy collaborated with the National Criminal Justice Training Center to create joint training programs for cold case investigations, long-term missing investigations, and child abduction investigations for use throughout Indian Country.

This joint effort has resulted in over 300 Indian Country law enforcement officers being trained to this date. The BIA Indian Police Academy has also implemented missing person courses in our basic and advanced training programs, resulting in an additional 158 law enforcement personnel trained this year.

In addition to the focused efforts of the BIA Office of Justice Services, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs office has been

directly engaged in three listening sessions within Indian Country and Alaska since June. Participation has included senior DOI leadership, the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration for Native Americans, and the Department of Justice.

In May, the inaugural roundtable was hosted by the Gila River community in Arizona. With the leadership of Governor Stephen Lewis, we were able to convene tribal leadership, the Administration, and other stakeholders to engage in a discussion on Reclaiming our Native Communities.

In August, we took the Reclaiming our Native Communities to Bethel and Nome, Alaska to hear from Alaska Native communities. These face-to-face discussions between the Administration and tribal leaders from throughout the United States was intended to highlight the Department's commitment to promoting public safety in Indian Country and Alaska Native villages.

The Administration remains committed to partnering with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal leadership communities and other appropriate stakeholders to better assure safety and economic prosperity in Indian Country. It is imperative that we continue to work in partnership and create safe communities and arrest the trend of issues plaguing our Native communities.

I look forward to working with members of the Subcommittee and Congress to address this important issue. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Addington follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLES ADDINGTON, DEPUTY BUREAU DIRECTOR—OFFICE OF JUSTICE SERVICES, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Good morning Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Charles Addington, and I am the Deputy Bureau Director—Office of Justice Services (OJS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), at the Department of the Interior (Department). Thank you for the opportunity to present a statement on behalf of the Department regarding the crisis confronting our American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN) communities, which is Missing and Murdered AIAN (Missing and Murdered Indigenous People or MMIP). The Department has made it a priority to address this crisis head-on. My testimony will reflect the current work of the Department.

As you are aware, American Indians and Alaska Natives are two and a half times more likely to experience violent crimes and at least two times more likely to experience rape or sexual assault crimes in comparison to all other ethnicities, according to the Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Statistics. With AIAN facing disproportionately high levels of violence across the country, more can be done to support meaningful efforts to address these high rates in Indian Country.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) have helped bring attention to the high rate of violence in Indian Country and the gaps in identifying crime trends in Indian Country. The Department is coordinating with other Federal partners to strengthen crime data reporting. However, significant gaps in data that exacerbate the MMIP crisis remain. These challenges are present across multiple sectors but are particularly problematic in the context of criminal justice, in which Federal, state, tribal, and local governments share responsibilities. It is important to continue efforts to build accurate data and provide Congress, the public, and, most importantly, tribes, with the information needed to identify and analyze the criminal justice needs in Indian Country to better address this crisis.

These data gaps impact how law enforcement officials handle or follow up on cases. Under-reporting, racial misclassification, potential gender or racial bias, and

a lack of law enforcement resources required to follow through and close out cases appropriately, are just some of the challenges faced when working on MMIP cases.

In 2017, the Urban Indian Health Institute surveyed 71 cities across the United States to collect data on murdered and missing indigenous women and girls in urban settings. The Institute's survey and analysis of the collected data culminated in their 2018 report, *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, which highlights some of the challenges of data collection with respect to AIAN populations in urban centers.

For Indian Country, BIA OJS collects monthly crime statistics from Tribal and BIA law enforcement programs and submits the information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) each quarter. The information collected is specific to the data required for the FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR), which currently does not track missing persons or domestic violence statistics.

As the UCR does not collect missing persons data, BIA OJS has partnered with DOJ's National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), a program of the National Institute of Justice, to create new data fields in their system to specifically capture tribal affiliation data. The new fields were implemented and went live in late February 2019. This additional data will assist law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions with tracking and investigating missing persons throughout the country.

Going forward, better inter-agency coordination and cooperation is needed to improve the integrity of the data collected. While it is widely believed that there may be a correlation between opioid and other narcotics abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, and MMIP, without sufficient data, it is difficult to draw solid conclusions. Federal agencies must develop concrete solutions to improve agency data collection to ensure these crimes are being tracked and investigated appropriately so that any trends can be properly identified and addressed. For example, adding the above listed types of incidents to the data collected by DOJ, BIA, and tribal and other cooperating law enforcement agencies is a positive step toward addressing the data collection problem.

BIA OJS has also begun efforts to raise awareness and provide training to Indian Country law enforcement personnel. In January 2018, the BIA Indian Police Academy (IPA) began discussions with the National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC) on collaborating to create joint training programs for cold case investigations, long-term missing investigations, and child abduction investigations for use throughout Indian Country. The BIA OJS also continues to assess the need for greater training opportunities in the northern tier states to better support Indian Country Officers and Agents.

To specifically address the missing persons aspect of this issue, in 2018 the BIA-IPA launched human trafficking courses in the Indian Country Police Officer Training Program; the Basic Police Officer Bridge Training Program; and the Indian Country Criminal Investigator Training Program (a joint FBI, BIA, and Tribal attended program).

In February 2018, the NCJTC and BIA-IPA identified dates and locations for three pilot training programs on Advanced Cold Case Long Term Missing Investigations in Montana and North Dakota. The three training programs were held at Blackfeet, Montana and New Town, North Dakota. A total of 117 personnel were trained in these programs. The BIA-IPA is also scheduled to participate in the assessment of an NCJTC project to create a web/mobile-capable investigative guide for tribal first responders on endangered, missing, and abducted persons.

In addition to the focused efforts of BIA OJS, my office has been directly engaged in three listening sessions within Indian Country and Alaska since June. Participation has included DOI leadership, the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration for Native Americans, and DOJ.

In May, an inaugural roundtable was hosted by the Gila River Indian Community in Sacaton, Arizona. With the leadership of Governor Stephen Lewis, we were able to convene tribal leadership, the Administration and other stakeholders to engage in a discussion on, "Reclaiming Our Native Communities." In August, we took our "Reclaiming Our Native Communities" roundtable to Bethel and Nome, Alaska to hear from Alaska Native Communities. These face-to-face discussions between the Trump administration and tribal leaders from throughout the United States highlight the Department's commitment to promoting public safety in Indian Country and Alaska Native villages.

These engagements were well received by all tribal leaders in attendance. Many tribal leaders agreed that a holistic, multi-faceted approach to building safe and secure communities is necessary to address the particular criminal issues that plague Indian Country and Alaska Native villages. Broadband and improved

communications development were perceived by many tribal leaders as a necessary support structure to promote critical response to crime and emergency situations. Tribal leaders also advocated for infrastructure for housing, community water and sewer, improved law enforcement facilities, training, and capacity building for tribal courts and justice systems to promote self-determined safety protocols within tribal communities.

The Trump administration remains committed to partnering with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal leadership, communities and other appropriate stakeholders to better ensure safety and economic prosperity in Indian Country. It is imperative that we continue to work in partnership and create safe communities and arrest the trend of issues plaguing our Native communities.

I look forward to working with members of this Subcommittee and Congress to address this important issue. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO MR. ADDINGTON, DEPUTY BUREAU  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF JUSTICE SERVICES, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Addington did not submit responses to the Committee by the appropriate deadline for inclusion in the printed record.**

**Question Submitted by Rep. Gallego**

*Question 1. In your testimony, you mention that gaps in data pose great obstacles to Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW) investigations and that the alleviation of such gaps remains of importance to BIA.*

*1a. What initiatives has your agency undertaken to alleviate the gaps in MMIW data?*

*1b. Please provide any timelines that outline these initiatives to this Committee.*

**Question Submitted by Rep. Grijalva**

*Question 1. Recently, it has been publicized that the Trump administration hosted a roundtable discussion on the theme of “Reclaiming Our Native Communities” with tribal stakeholders. In BIA’s testimony you acknowledge these discussions and notes that the roundtable occurred in Sacaton, Arizona last May. However, DOI’s online press release states that the discussion occurred in Sacaton, Arizona on June 11. Representatives from BIA and ANA were both present at the “Reclaiming Our Native Communities” discussion, however it remains unclear how many of these discussions occurred—as evidenced by these date discrepancies—and what was established at them.*

*1a. Please provide a read-out, transcript, notes and list of participants from this roundtable to this Committee.*

*1b. Will the information or notes collected from this listening session be made public?*

**Questions Submitted by Rep. Haaland**

*Question 1. BIA’s Office of Justice Services (OJS) reports different data to both FBI and the National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ) crime databases—violent crimes resulting in death get sent over to the FBI, while missing persons data are sent to NIJ. This sounds awfully inefficient and difficult to navigate.*

*1a. Has BIA considered proposing and/or supporting the establishment of a single database for MMIW cases?*

*1b. Has BIA done any work toward this?*

*1c. How can Congress help consolidate this information to get more accurate data?*

*Question 2. You mentioned during your testimony that your agency is looking into working on and reopening cold cases regarding MMIW.*

*2a. How many cold cases exist? If an exact answer isn’t feasible, how many cold cases do you/your agency estimate to exist?*

*2b. How many years back do these cases span to be considered a “cold case?”*

2c. What level of priority do these cases receive compared to more recent cases?

2d. Are additional agency resources or other sources of funding available to help with these cold case investigations? If not, where can such resources come from to aid in these cold cases?

Question 3. In October 2018, the Office of Justice Services offered information about its work on sexual and domestic violence in Indian Country under the "Victim Assistance" tab. This information is no longer available online and was replaced with DOJ, HHS, and State Department links. To note, the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) is a much smaller department than BIA and they've already released online resources regarding the MMIW crisis.

3a. Why has this information been taken down/deleted from your agency's website within the last year?

3b. Does BIA plan to provide online resources for the MMIW crisis?

3c. Will BIA release the information generated from its listening sessions to the public?

Question 4. As a general matter, emergency response training for tribal police department officers is needed to decrease officer response time to MMIW cases and to address the inflated levels of violence/domestic violence on reservations. Additional safety measures like the installation of surveillance cameras in areas of high crime/gang activity and the expansion of patrol vehicle units also disincentivize the continuation of these crimes.

4a. Is BIA working on preventative measures similarly to those described above to reduce crime on reservations?

4b. What is BIA's funding priority related to these preventative measures?

4c. What is BIA's funding priority and distribution for law enforcement? How are these amounts calculated? And, how do they compare to tribally-owned law enforcement?

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Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Mr. Addington.

The Chair now recognizes the Honorable John Anderson, the U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. JOHN ANDERSON, U.S. ATTORNEY  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
JUSTICE, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**

Mr. ANDERSON. Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide insight into the Department of Justice's work on responding to the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. We appreciate your attention to this important issue, and your efforts to understand the work being done to address it at an interagency level.

The heart of the Department of Justice's work in Indian Country, from law enforcement to prosecutions to policy development and program support, is aimed at addressing the unacceptably high rates of violent crime in Indian Country. Missing persons and murder cases are different issues that require different law enforcement responses.

Federal law enforcement investigates all suspected murders in Indian Country, and U.S. Attorney's Offices around the country work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to turn those investigations into prosecutable cases. In many ways, cases of missing individuals can be especially challenging to law enforcement in light of the myriad of reasons that someone may go missing.

However, we recognize that the term “Missing and Murdered” goes beyond investigative procedures or legal definitions. “Missing and murdered” has become a call to action to address the crimes and public safety conditions that result in lost loved ones, including domestic violence, sexual assault, substance abuse, and inadequate law enforcement resources.

As stated in President Trump’s Proclamation on Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaska Natives Awareness Day, we must work together to correct these injustices. The Department of Justice is expanding our efforts to respond to this call to action.

We are working closely with our colleagues at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Institute of Justice to better understand how data on reports of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women are collected, how often these numbers are updated, and what protocols are required to resolve reported cases. We have begun a targeted effort to educate Federal prosecutors and law enforcement, with an ultimate goal of establishing improved and more standardized protocols for data collection, reporting, and case management.

Ongoing coordination in Montana further illustrates the Department’s commitment to a collaborative approach to addressing the missing and murdered issue. On June 12 of this year, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Montana Department of Justice, the FBI, and the BIA co-sponsored a day-long missing persons training for both law enforcement and the public. Our goal was to inform law enforcement and the public about the problem of missing Indigenous persons and the various missing persons databases and alerts.

In addition to honing our law enforcement response to reports of missing or murdered people, the Department is advancing our technology to better support law enforcement and families investigating these cases. Our technological advances include expanded efforts to assist tribes in integrating Amber Alert protocols.

Our Office of Justice Programs, or OJP, provides funding and technical assistance opportunities to integrate tribal Amber Alert communication plans with state or regional plans. And that helps us better align our resources with the needs expressed by tribal representatives. Amber Alerts have become a critical tool in responding quickly to reports of missing persons.

Another one of our key systems is the National Institute of Justice National Missing and Unidentified Persons system, or NamUs. NamUs was developed to help identify unidentified remains, locate missing persons, and bring resolution to victims’ families.

NamUs is a national centralized, web-based information clearinghouse and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases. NamUs combines technology, forensic services, and investigative technical assistance to support and assist law enforcement officials, medical examiners and coroners, allied forensic professionals, and families from across the country.

NIJ and NamUs staff have launched a targeted outreach and training campaign to tribal law enforcement, leadership, and community members to ensure Native communities are aware of the

NamUs technology and technical assistance, which are available for free to all Tribal Nations.

Finally, the Department recently announced our fifth expansion of the Tribal Access Program, or TAP, which provides federally recognized tribes with the ability to access and exchange data with the national crime information databases for both criminal justice and non-criminal justice purposes.

This access to information empowers tribal law enforcement to respond to reports of crime and missing persons in their communities more swiftly and more effectively. Access through TAP also enables tribes to coordinate more effectively with other law enforcement agencies involved in responding to crimes in Native communities.

The high statistics on crime in Indian Country motivate all of us who dedicate our professional lives to partnering with tribes to improve public safety in Native communities. We are all mindful of the deeply personal and often too heartbreaking stories faced by individuals, families, neighbors, and friends.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss this serious issue and the Department's activities in support of Native communities. And I look forward to addressing any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Anderson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN C. ANDERSON, UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and members of the Subcommittee—Thank you for the opportunity to provide insight into the Department of Justice's work in responding to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women. We appreciate your attention to this harrowing issue, and your efforts to understand the work at an interagency level.

The heart of the Department of Justice's work in Indian Country, from law enforcement to prosecutions to policy development and program support, is aimed at addressing the unacceptably high rates of violent crime in Indian Country. We are working to better understand how crime rates and the challenging public safety conditions faced by too many Native communities are linked with the rates of missing or murdered Native people, especially Native women. From a legal perspective, missing persons and murder cases are different issues that require different law enforcement responses. Federal law enforcement has the responsibility to investigate all suspected murders in Indian Country. U.S. Attorneys' Offices around the country work with our law enforcement partners in an attempt to turn those investigations into prosecutable cases. In many ways, cases of missing individuals can be especially challenging for law enforcement in light of the myriad of reasons that someone may go missing. However, we recognize that the term "missing and murdered" goes beyond investigative procedures or legal definitions. "Missing and murdered" has become a call to action to address the crimes and public safety conditions that result in lost loved ones, including domestic violence, sexual assault, substance abuse, and inadequate law enforcement resources. As stated in President Trump's May 5, 2019 Proclamation on Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaska Natives Awareness Day, we must work together to correct these injustices. The Department is expanding our efforts to respond to this call to action.

In keeping with the White House's direction, the Departments of Justice, the Interior, and Health and Human Services (HHS) are collaborating on a cross-agency effort to address this multi-faceted issue. Tribal representatives and your counterparts in the Senate have identified several aspects of missing and murdered cases that require focused attention from Federal agencies: unresolved, or "cold," cases; validating reported data; improving data collection; improving law enforcement protocols and our response to victims and their families; researching a possible correlation between human trafficking and cases of missing or murdered Natives; and addressing the missing and murdered issue in urban communities. The Department of Justice will serve as the lead agency for data-related topics and the improvement of law enforcement protocols.



The U.S. Attorney community has already initiated work to address these areas. Starting in early 2018 with the first meeting of the Attorney General's Native American Issues Subcommittee for this administration, we identified four priorities related to reducing violent crime in Indian Country, including missing and murdered Indigenous women and violence against women. Since that time, we have addressed missing and murdered Indigenous persons at every meeting: we had a dedicated panel on this topic at the national U.S. Attorneys Conference and supported deeper discussion with agency partners at a breakout session. We also included a training on this issue at the recent Native American Issues Subcommittee meeting at Santa Ana Pueblo, in my home district of New Mexico. Moreover, United States Attorneys with Indian Country or federally recognized tribes in their district have already begun working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to identify open or outstanding missing and murdered Indigenous persons cases for review. The Native American Issues Subcommittee Chair and Vice Chair also met with senior FBI officials to discuss investigative protocols and processes for murdered persons cases arising out of Indian Country.

In addition to our discussions within the Department of Justice, we are also conscious of the need to listen to and heed the voices of those whose lives have been immediately impacted by this issue. Just 3 weeks ago, along with several of my U.S. Attorney colleagues, I attended a tribal consultation in New Buffalo, Michigan, hosted by the Department's Office on Violence Against Women. We heard firsthand, from tribal leaders and others, about the emotional and psychological toll that the high rate of missing and murdered takes on families and communities, and we are committed to standing beside them to address this issue.

We are working closely with our colleagues at the FBI to better understand how data on reports of missing or murdered persons are collected, how often those numbers are updated, and what protocols are required to resolve reported cases. We have begun a targeted effort to educate Federal prosecutors and law enforcement, with an ultimate goal of establishing improved and more standardized protocols for data collection, reporting, and case management. As we take steps to improve our response to cases of missing or murdered Indigenous people, the combined Federal team will reach out to our tribal, state and local partners to ensure that the improved practices and protocols reflect input from all of the agencies that contribute to cases of missing or murdered persons.

Ongoing coordination in Montana further illustrates the Department's commitment to a collaborative approach to address the missing and murdered issue. On June 12 of this year, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Montana Department of Justice, the FBI, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) co-sponsored a day-long Missing Persons Training for both law enforcement and the public. Our goal was to inform law enforcement and the public about the problem of missing Indigenous persons, and the various missing persons databases and alerts. Law enforcement were also trained on responses to missing persons reports, and victim awareness and support. The public was also trained on what to do when a loved one goes missing and on human trafficking issues. Presenters included the FBI, BIA, National Crime Information Center (NCIC), National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, AMBER Alert, the Criminal Justice Information Network, Montana Department of Justice Missing Persons Clearinghouse and Montana Analysis Technical Information Center. More than 120 people attended, including members of the general public, persons with tribal affiliations, and criminal justice and law enforcement representatives. We will be holding another statewide training this fall in Billings, Montana.

At its request, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Montana has been appointed to the Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force created by the Montana legislature. In addition, earlier this year the U.S. Attorney's Office in Montana coordinated with NamUs to provide training to the tribal council, government officials and MMIW working group of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and to the public on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. They are also coordinating to provide training to the public on other Montana reservations this fall. To further public awareness, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Montana is also working on a public service announcement on what to do when a loved one goes missing on or off a reservation.

The Department is eager to work with our Federal, state, tribal, and local partners in any locality to ensure the full weight of our collective efforts make a lasting impact on lowering the rates of missing and murdered people, especially women, in Native communities.

In addition to honing our law enforcement response to reports of missing or murdered people, the Department is advancing our technology to better support law enforcement and families investigating these cases. Our technological advancements include expanded efforts to assist tribes interested in integrating AMBER Alert

protocols. Our Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides funding and technical assistance opportunities to integrate tribal AMBER Alert communication plans with state or regional plans. OJP maintains evaluations of readiness, training needs, technological challenges, and other obstacles to integrating communication plans. These evaluations help us align our resources with the needs expressed by tribal representatives. AMBER Alerts have become a critical tool in responding quickly to reports of missing persons. Our focus on improving law enforcement information sharing will continue to be an important component of our response to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous people.

In late July, I presented at the National Amber Alert in Indian Country Symposium at Isleta Pueblo in New Mexico. Funded through OJP's Amber Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program, and designed to further implementation of the Ashlynnne Mike Amber Alert in Indian Country Act of 2018, this symposium focused on the logistics of ensuring adequate collaborations between state and local Amber Alert plans and tribal law enforcement. As the Committee is well aware, the goal of extending Amber Alert to our tribal communities, and ensuring appropriate access to Amber Alert by tribal law enforcement was motivated by the unspeakably tragic abduction and murder of 11-year-old Ashlynnne Mike on the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. Participants at the symposium got to hear directly from Ashlynnne Mike's mother, Pamela Foster. Her moving story about her daughter, and the personal devastation she suffered upon learning of her loss, underscored the critical importance of an effective Amber Alert system for our tribal communities.

Another one of our key systems is the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) NamUs. NamUs was developed to help identify unidentified remains, locate missing persons, and bring resolution to victims' families. NamUs is a national, centralized, web-based information clearinghouse and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases. NamUs combines technology, forensic services, and investigative technical assistance from a seasoned staff of subject matter experts to support and assist law enforcement officials, medical examiners and coroners, allied forensic professionals, and families from across the country.

The NamUs database is a permission-based system, meaning it offers both a publicly viewable information and restricted criminal justice-sensitive fields designed to protect privileged information. Cases are only published in NamUs after rigorous vetting with the appropriate local, state, Federal, or tribal law enforcement agency in order to secure the privacy and protection of persons reported missing and to ensure quality control over the missing person data. For instance, some missing person reports involve individuals who do not wish for their location to be known to family or associates due to circumstances involving domestic violence and other safety issues. Since the majority of the cases reported to FBI's NCIC are recovered quickly and use of NamUs is not a mandatory part of all law enforcement protocols for missing persons, many are never entered into NamUs. With the support of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), NamUs has been expanding to include a Victim Services Division (VSD) to support the families and loved ones of missing and murdered victims with a variety of services and resources for coping with their loss. Although NamUs has been a successful tool for law enforcement for many years, it will benefit from a stronger emphasis on support for the families and loved ones of the missing and murdered. Survivors often have few formal support systems and often wait years for information about a missing loved one.

NIJ and NamUs staff have launched a targeted outreach campaign to tribal law enforcement, leadership, and community members to ensure Native communities are aware of the NamUs technology and technical assistance, which are available for free to all tribal nations. More online development will occur to reach out to tribes and their law enforcement agencies, more training and public awareness about NamUs among tribal communities, as well as targeted victim services for the families of missing or murdered indigenous women and girls. NamUs has helped resolve 400 cases and currently has 402 active AI/AN missing persons cases, and we are working to ensure that any tribal agency wishing to expand the use of NamUs has our full support. NIJ is committed to working with Tribal nations directly to enhance technology and provide training, better support and technical assistance, and investigative and forensic services.

The Department recently announced our fifth expansion of the Tribal Access Program (TAP), which provides federally recognized tribes with the ability to access and exchange data with the national crime information databases for both criminal justice and non-criminal justice purposes. TAP provides training as well as software and biometric/biographic kiosk workstations to process finger and palm prints. This access to information empowers tribal law enforcement to respond to reports of crime and missing persons in their communities more swiftly and more effectively.

Access through TAP also enables tribes to coordinate more effectively with other law enforcement agencies involved in responding to crimes in Native communities.

The Department has been working with your Senate colleagues on several proposed bills that are intended to better equip Federal agencies, states, and tribes in responding to reports of missing or murdered persons. We have had a number of conversations on technical aspects of their proposed legislation and believe the outreach has been beneficial. For example, Senate staff have worked with Department of Justice subject matter experts in developing language for S. 227 “Savanna’s Act,” which presents a series of clear and targeted actions that would, in their current draft, improve tribal access to databases, establish guidelines for responding to cases of missing and murdered indigenous people, and create annual reporting requirements. We welcome similar outreach for technical input from you or your staff and would be happy to assist.

The high statistics on crime in Indian Country motivate all of us who dedicate our professional lives to partnering with tribes to improve public safety in Native communities. I want to underscore that it is never just about the numbers for us. Many of us working in support of Native communities have relatives and friends in the places we strive to benefit, and we are all mindful of the deeply personal and too-often heartbreaking realities faced by individuals, by families, by neighbors and friends. Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss this serious issue. If there is continued interest in discussing the Department of Justice’s activities in support of Native communities, we would be happy to follow up with you or your staff.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO U.S. ATTORNEY ANDERSON, DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**Mr. Anderson did not submit responses to the Committee by the appropriate deadline for inclusion in the printed record.**

**Questions Submitted by Rep. Gallego**

*Question 1. How will the long-term plan of U.S. Attorneys presenting at conferences address the on-the-ground efforts of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) movement?*

*Question 2. In your testimony, you mentioned that the Native American Issues Subcommittee met with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to discuss MMIW cases.*

*2a. What protocols did you discuss (i.e. jurisdictional, investigative, etc.)?*

*2b. Will the information and notes gathered for the meetings become public?*

*2c. Will there be a final report or promising strategies based on this intergovernmental agency interaction?*

**Questions Submitted by Rep. Grijalva**

*Question 1. Annually, how many of the FBI-referred MMIW cases are prosecutable?*

*Question 2. In your testimony, you mentioned that you attended a tribal consultation in New Buffalo, Michigan.*

*2a. What will you do with this information?*

*2b. Is the information publicly available?*

*2c. Will you provide any other information developed from tribal consultations to the Committee?*

**Questions Submitted by Rep. Haaland**

*Question 1. The Bridging Agency Data Gaps & Ensuring Safety Act addresses the gaps in national MMIW data by requiring BIA direct-service officers and FBI agents with jurisdiction in Indian Country to report missing persons cases to the NamUs database.*

*1a. Considering that the FBI and BIA work collaboratively to process crime scenes and collect evidence, why do you believe that MMIW data collection remains a problem?*

*1b. Where can these two departments improve their coordination to adequately collect the evidence and data relating to these crimes?*

*Question 2. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) fund application process is lengthy and has several phases. Many tribes do not have the administrative staff available to apply for these grants, although these critical resources for Indigenous victims are greatly needed.*

*2a. Has your agency looked critically at this process? If so, does BIA plan to simplify the application process or provide additional administrative assistance to help tribes apply?*

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Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you. I thank the expert witnesses for their powerful testimonies. I am reminding the Members that Committee Rule 3(d) imposes a 5-minute limit on questions.

The Chairman will now recognize Members for any questions they may wish to ask the witnesses. I will start by recognizing myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. ADDINGTON, in your testimony you mentioned that gaps in data pose great obstacles to Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women investigations, and that the alleviation of such gaps remains of importance to BIA. What initiatives has your agency undertaken to remedy this issue and alleviate gaps in the data?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Thank you for that question. One of the things that we have done is we have partnered with NamUs to try to start gathering the “Missing and Murdered” cases that are still active throughout Indian Country and actually get them into a system where we can have the data, where we can actually pull and report and see exactly how many cases there are.

Currently, there is not a system in place that we can just go to at the BIA and pull that data because some cases are worked by other agencies as well. So, we are working with NamUs—all the BIA has already been—and I have put a policy in place that we will enter all of our data into the system, and we are trying to get the tribal programs, encouraging them to enter their data as well.

Once we get those cases entered into the NamUs system and using the new data fields, that is going to give us the opportunity to be able to pull a report and see exactly how many cases that we have out there so we can start working on investigating cold cases or cases that are active that we are not aware of that may be older.

So, that is what the Department is doing right now to address it.

Mr. GALLEGO. And since we are talking about NamUs, in your testimony you mentioned your work along with NIJ to improve the NamUs database so it can better address the MMIW cases. NamUs has been around now for about 10—well, 11 years. However, it has taken over 10 years to add basic tribal affiliation data fields to its systems. Why did it take the Department of Justice and BIA over 10 years to see the flaw in their data?

The second question is: Prior to the tribal affiliation data field, what was used in place of that to actually collect this—i.e., were all crimes listed as just “Indian” or some similar type of category?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Prior to 2012, 2013 at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, we actually collected additional data from the tribes and the BIA programs specifically to BIA that was outside of the UCR data. So, once we started just submitting the UCR data, we quit

collecting that information because of getting the information transferred from the BIA over to the FBI in the exportable file from the tribes. It became really burdensome for the tribes, so we tried to streamline that process, which caused us not to collect that data any more.

Mr. GALLEGO. On that note, what is going to happen with that data, previously collected information that was sorted differently than it is now in the NamUs system?

Mr. ADDINGTON. The data we collected before did not have the specific data fields where it broke the data down. We just collected the numbers from the tribes, so like missing person numbers. But it did not go into detail of the cases or anything.

By working with NamUs and adding those specific fields in there, we can actually determine what their tribal affiliation is, whether they have gone missing from Indian Country or off of Indian Country, because of course we only have jurisdiction on Indian Country for the BIA. So, we can actually pair those down and see specifically where the cases are coming from and differentiate between the state cases, the BIA cases, and the Federal cases.

Mr. GALLEGO. To follow up, back in December 2018 you testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in a hearing titled, "Missing and Murdered: Confronting the Silent Crisis in Indian Country." We read your public testimony then. I have noticed that the testimony you submitted this week is very similar to the testimony that you had last December. In fact, it looks like an entire paragraph of your current testimony detailing BIA's new training program initiatives has been copied and pasted verbatim from your prior testimony.

With that being said, recognizing that we are in dire straits in the status of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, how do you explain what the BIA has been doing in the last year? For me, from my perspective and the staff perspective, what we see is nothing but inaction. So, I would like to understand: What is the actual action that is going to be coming out of this?

And please explain to us what other tasks or actions your office has taken in regards to dealing with MMIW.

Mr. ADDINGTON. The one thing that we have done is expand our training and our awareness out there. Getting more training out to any law enforcement programs was crucial because we identified that there were some response issues in some of the previous cases that we reviewed.

So, getting additional training out there so folks know how to respond—because a missing person report that comes in is not necessarily a crime when it is reported in to our police departments out there. We have to treat those with more or better response, so that is what we have tried to put in place, to make sure folks are trained.

We have redone our policies internally to make sure that we have strengthened our policy on the response of missing persons and abducted persons for the BIA as well. And then we have started holding sessions to listen to tribal leadership on what the issues actually are out in Indian Country. And we are looking at different options, like cold case task forces, different things like that, to

actually start addressing some of these cases that are out there that have not been solved over the years.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK. Well, I will come back to this.

Now I recognize Ranking Member Cook.

Mr. COOK. Thank you very much.

When you were talking, you mentioned the Amber Alerts. For years, we never had the Amber Alerts or similar programs where you could highlight it right away. And I know you are doing that, but I am not sure if it is coordinated.

And can I get some feel whether that would immediately go out through all of Indian Country when we have somebody missing or we have a tragic situation, where people might have data that could help law enforcement? I am just not getting a good feeling, because in California we tried to do that for years and it never got that way until, finally, it was adopted and it was a great program.

And here is where I am going with this, and I will let you comment, because on the seriousness and the importance to this Subcommittee and to the whole Committee, I am wondering if we should elevate this to the situation where at least you could send us, as people that have oversight responsibility and enact laws and regulations, that hey, what is this? You have had three Amber Alerts in this area here. What are your recommendations? What has been done?

And I don't want to micro-manage. But the situation is so bad right now that—I was in the Marine Corps, and it needs command attention. So, what I was just suggesting in terms of informing us on this, with the circumstances and recommended action, including, if need be, suggested legislation. What do you think of that proposal?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Thank you for that question. I absolutely think the Amber Alert system should be expanded and that we do have some Indian Country programs that actually have been able to make Amber Alert notifications. And we have some states that actually have a state system as well.

So, we try to get the information out. When something meets the criteria to do an Amber Alert, we try to get the information out as wide as we can in those situations. And there are also some localized situations. If we have a missing person that may not reach up to an Amber Alert situation, we have some notification systems locally that we can actually get that information out so we can be on the lookout for that person before it becomes a criminal offense or they get harmed.

Mr. COOK. Yes. And I don't want to continue on this, but I just want to emphasize again, we had a situation a number of years ago where a number of people were killed. And it ended up that it was the same murderer—somebody in law enforcement, I might add—that had some real problems. Actually committed a crime, and I won't go into that.

But the DNA evidence, everything else, which has moved light years in the last decade, I would say, that we can share all over. And if it is not being done or something like that, then I think maybe—I am speaking just for myself, not on behalf of the whole Committee—but I think a lot of us are just frustrated.

In the short time that we have in Congress, we want to do something because the stats and the number of folks are so unsatisfactory right now. So, I am looking for suggestions, proposals, that we might have as part of oversight or even, as I mentioned earlier, with law to do this.

How many people got killed in California because nothing was done when people didn't even recognize it? It is a large state, granted, but they were all over the state. And somebody finally said—wait a minute. We have the same killer all over the place.

I am not saying that is the scenario. But I think, loud and clear, we want to be involved. And at least some type of Amber Alert to at least this Committee, should be in order, with what happened, the circumstances. And recommended congressional action, if any, should be taken. Thank you. That was just a comment.

I yield.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Ranking Member.

I now recognize Chairman Grijalva.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Recently, the Trump administration hosted a roundtable discussion on the theme of “Reclaiming our Native Communities” with tribal stakeholders. In BIA’s testimony, you acknowledged the discussions and noted that a roundtable occurred in Sacaton, Arizona last May.

However, DOI’s online press release states that the discussion occurred at Sacaton on June 11, and that representatives from BIA and ANA were both present at that particular roundtable discussion. However, it still remains unclear how many of these discussions occurred. You can notice that by the date discrepancy, and what was established at them.

So, Commissioner Hovland and Deputy Bureau Director Addington, is there a public readout or transcript from this roundtable that is available to the Committee or to the public?

Mr. ADDINGTON. There is not yet. We have held three so far.

Mr. GRIJALVA. So, I am assuming you will release public information related to who attended the meetings and general notes and summaries regarding those meetings when you are finished with these roundtables?

Mr. ADDINGTON. I am not sure if something will be released to the public. I know the information will be used for tribal comments and what the tribes are wanting us to do in those communities.

Mr. GRIJALVA. And do you consider this tribal consultation in any way?

Mr. ADDINGTON. No. These were listening sessions with the tribal leadership.

Mr. GRIJALVA. So, concrete plans of action were proposed or considered during these discussions? Or was it more of an open-ended kind of a discussion?

Mr. ADDINGTON. No. We did discuss some of our thoughts on cold case task forces and some of the things that the Department would like to do to address some of these issues. Those were discussed. We did a presentation for tribal leaders. But we wanted to hear from the tribal leadership of what their thoughts are and what ideas that they have to address these issues in their community because they are best to know what is going on in their communities.

Mr. GRIJALVA. OK. I think there is a great deal of interest on the part of the Committee, and certainly the Chairman and Ranking Member, to have as much information as available from these areas in order to continue to not only be informed but to know what direction we need to be taking legislatively.

Mr. ADDINGTON, a couple of questions that have to do with the comments that you made. And it was testimony relative to—you highlighted the importance of the Violence Against Women Act, specifically how this legislation has helped illustrate to Federal agencies the higher rates of violence against women in Indian Country.

Would you agree that the Violence Against Women Act needs to be reauthorized?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Yes. Absolutely. Anything, any tools that we can give Indian Country to better enforce crimes against our Native women and community members we would happily support.

Mr. GRIJALVA. How many officers are currently on staff within BIA's police forces? And is that a sufficient number to deal with the crisis that this hearing is about?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Well, I can tell you law enforcement programs throughout Indian Country are all under-resourced right now. It has been very difficult to recruit not only for tribal law enforcement programs, BIA programs, but either other Federal agencies and state agencies.

We have talked to a number of leaders in these different law enforcement programs, and everyone is running across the issues of recruitment. So, they are definitely not resourced where they need to be, or every one of them is not. Some tribal programs are better than others just because of the location that they are in, and they are able to find applicants for law enforcement programs.

Mr. GRIJALVA. So, it is insufficient?

Mr. ADDINGTON. I think we could always use more resources, yes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Commissioner, in your testimony you mentioned your work this year with the Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs. Could I ask you who is involved in the council? What types of policies or plans are proposed on the specific issue for this hearing—Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and human trafficking issues? And is that information available to the public? Is information about these meetings public or not?

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you for that question. The Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs was established by law under the Native American Programs Act. It is an internal work group designed really to ensure that at HHS, when we are developing policy and budgets that affect Native Americans, that we are working collaboratively.

So, it is our internal work group, and we have met three times. Yesterday was our third meeting. And it is leadership across HHS, so SAMHSA, CMS, HRSA, IHS, ACF, all of the stakeholders. And, yes, MMIW, as well as it cross-sections with opioids and substance abuse in human trafficking, is one of our priority areas.

We receive our input through tribal consultations, the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Council, which is taking place this week in Washington, DC, as well as next week in Temecula. I am hosting



consultation and will have a couple of hours for tribal hours to visit with the ICNAA body.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. My time is up? OK. Thank you very much.

Mr. GALLEGO. We will have more rounds of questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I now recognize Representative San Nicolas.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Can you imagine if the women murder rates in Washington, DC were 10 times the national average? Or can you imagine if the women murder rates in Los Angeles, or Chicago, or Houston, or New York, or Miami were 10 times the national average? We would be alarmed to no end.

But what makes these statistics even more horrific is that our Indigenous populations are already distressed populations. So, they are 10 times the national average in already distressed populations.

So, as I take all of this in—I am a new Member of Congress. It has been an honor to be a member of this Committee. I am the Representative from Guam. I have an Indigenous population on Guam. We are an unrecognized people; hopefully one day we can be. But one of the things that scares my people from even being recognized is the fact that we have these kinds of statistics that go unaddressed in already existing recognized peoples. And constitutionally, the responsibility of this country rests here in this Congress to be able to address these kinds of concerns.

And as I listen to the testimony, I hear a lot of movement, but I am not quite certain that there are going to be actual outcomes.

So, my question is very specific. If we have a statistic that says that the murder rates for our women in Indigenous communities is 10 times the national average, what is the timeline for us to drive this figure back down to the national average? Are we going to drive it down in the next year? The next 5 years? The next 10 years? What is the timeline for us to be able to anticipate when we are going to be able to come back to this Committee and say that we have solved this problem and we are no longer so egregious in these kind of statistics?

Mr. ANDERSON. Congressman, thank you for the question. I wish I could tell you a time frame. I wish I could tell you we would come back here in 6 months, a year, 2 years, and have driven those rates down to an acceptable level—not that there is an acceptable level of murder in our society. But the points you make are fair ones.

I can tell you, from the Department of Justice's activities, we are actively engaged, along with our Federal law enforcement partners, in making every effort to reduce the unacceptable levels of violence that we do see in our tribal communities.

In my office, we have 11 full-time prosecutors who are dedicated to working with our Federal law enforcement and local and tribal law enforcement partners in investigating and prosecuting criminal cases, principally violent crime cases, that occur in our tribal communities. I serve on the Native American Issues Subcommittee of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee, and it is an exceptionally active subcommittee that works to address, on a holistic,

comprehensive level, the issues of violent crime that we see across the country in our tribal communities.

The short answer is, I do not have a time frame for you. I wish that I did. But we are actively engaged. We are devoted to pursuing criminal justice in Indian Country, to investigating and prosecuting cases to the best of our abilities. I continue to be hopeful, as I know my Federal law enforcement partners do, that those efforts will ultimately yield a reduction in the unacceptably high rates of violent crime in our tribal communities.

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you for your question. I really appreciate that.

At the Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs, we discussed and we are going to be setting goals and benchmarks, we are in the process of that. I am Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families as well. And really, at ACF, we are designed to help strengthen individuals, families, and communities.

And there are a lot of great things taking place in our Native communities through their ACF programs. We are going to be visiting some of our tribes that have great one-stop shops—because that is what we are hearing, is there needs to be a one-stop shop of wrap-around services—and then encourage that in other communities.

But I also wanted to let you know that I had the honor of traveling to your homeland this summer with members from our ICNAA group, the Intradepartmental Council, and had a great roundtable that was hosted by your governor and lieutenant governor on human trafficking. And we are working in partnership with them to be able to come up with a strategy.

Again, we want to be respectful of culture, which is why we are trying to get to the different regions and develop them.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. My time is running short. I appreciate the answers. I am sure, Mr. Addington, you will say something similar.

The reason why I raised the point in the beginning of my statement about how this would be considered a national crisis if it was a statistic affecting any one of our cities is, appreciating the work that you do, for us not to be able to have a concrete timeline and to be acting with a sense of urgency underscores the fact that we need to do a lot more than what we currently are.

And what this Congress needs to do to support you, I think, is something that we will be more than willing to entertain. So, I would suggest that we work to a level where we develop the strategy to be able to come back with a timeline. If this was happening in DC, or LA, or Houston, or New York, or Miami, we would have a timeline. We would say, we are going to drive this down in the next year or the next 2 years.

And for us to be able to say, “We are going to be able to do our best,” I think is just very sad.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GALLEGO. I now recognize Representative Case of Hawaii.

Mr. CASE. Thank you, Chair.

Like my colleague from Guam, I represent an Indigenous population. I represent the Indigenous peoples of Hawaii, the Native Hawaiians. There are well over half a million Native Hawaiians

living in our country, of whom roughly 300,000 live in Hawaii proper.

This number is obviously large, much larger than many of the federally recognized tribes, and they also suffer from many of the indicia that you have identified in your testimony, whether it be outright missing and murdered Indigenous women, Native Hawaiian women, to domestic violence, to crime rates, to sexual assault, to lost loved ones. Every indicia also impacts Native Hawaiians.

And I say this not only on behalf of Native Hawaiians but on behalf of many Indigenous peoples throughout our country who do not fit easily into your definitions of “Indian Country” and “Tribes” and “Reservations” and all of the more structured Federal 150 years’ worth of law dealing with Indigenous peoples.

And I think that sometimes they get left out of this equation. Certainly, I know that Native Hawaiians feel that they are often treated as an afterthought by the Federal Government when they are Indigenous peoples and when they deserve the same attention when they have the same consequence, deserve the same attention, the same programs.

So, testimony that says Native Americans and Alaska Natives that does not also say Native Hawaiians is just a knee-jerk reaction from me: Why not? And I am sure the gentleman from Guam would feel the same way.

First of all, I want to make that point because every time we talk about any issue in this Subcommittee or in your work, I hope you always think about Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous peoples beyond what you consider Native Americans and Alaska Natives, No. 1.

No. 2, in that vein, have you considered or consulted with the Native Hawaiian community, which is structured and represented, including the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations in the Department of the Interior, an existing office, on this particular issue? So, in other words, has there been outreach? Has there been inclusion? Has there been consultation? And if not, can you do that? Ms. Hovland, I think you are probably the appropriate person.

Ms. HOVLAND. Yes. Under our statute, under the Native American Programs Act, Native Americans are defined by law, which includes Native Hawaiians and the Native Pacific Island relatives also. So, yes, during that period that we were in Guam, we were over for 2 weeks in the Pacific Basin, and we actually had 2 days of roundtables which we partnered with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. And one of the topics was human trafficking and murdered Indigenous peoples.

And we had law enforcement there since Interior does not have jurisdiction with law enforcement. We also did have the Department of the Interior’s Insular Affairs present, and we had very good dialogue. We are working with those stakeholders that were identified as we develop, again, a plan specific to their communities and considering the culture.

So, we want the community members to lead it, and we will help develop the framework and see what services we can provide to support that.

Mr. CASE. Certainly. I am willing to work with you on that on behalf of Native Hawaiians, and not just in Hawaii but everywhere.

And then to Mr. Addington and Mr. Anderson, any particular comment on focus or inclusion or consideration of Native Hawaiians and perhaps other Indigenous peoples not within the structured Federal regime?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Well, for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, of course, like Ms. Hovland said, our problem is that we have no jurisdiction there. So, that is one of the reasons we have not engaged in that side of the house, is we are trying to come up with some concrete solutions and things for places where we have jurisdiction and where we have a need for resources right now.

Mr. CASE. Fair enough. Well, we would like to get into your jurisdiction at some point.

Mr. ADDINGTON. You bet.

Mr. CASE. And Mr. Anderson?

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Congressman. I will have to get back to the Committee about what efforts are particular to Native Hawaiians. We do have jurisdictional efforts there insofar as it is not considered Indian Country for purposes of the Federal law enforcement.

Mr. CASE. Fair enough. But from your perspective in the bar association and the other efforts that you are going through, please just consider my comments and take that back and log it into your thinking whenever you are dealing with these particular issues. I appreciate the effort.

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Representative Case.

I now recognize Representative Haaland.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you so much, Chairman.

Before I begin my brief statement and questions, I wanted to recognize Navajo Nation Council Delegate Amber Crotty, who worked tirelessly on the PROTECT Act, which was signed into law, that makes tribes eligible for Federal grants from the DOJ to aid in implementing the Amber Alert system, and has worked tirelessly on the Navajo Nation and the state of New Mexico on missing and murdered Indigenous women. And I thank you for being here.

Before I begin my questions, I would like to briefly state that the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women issue has been one of my top priorities this Congress. And I thank each of you for being here today. I really appreciate you coming and speaking with us.

The U.S. Government has a trust responsibility to Indian tribes. Statistics show that 8 in 10 Indigenous women will be raped, stalked, or abused in the course of their lifetimes, and the National Institute of Justice has stated that 84 percent of Native women experience violence.

This crisis has very deep and long-standing roots in our country. It is something that just did not start a few generations ago. On some Native lands, Indian women are murdered at more than 10 times the national average, so we can see why, as a topic of discussion, that we need to take action to stop this silent crisis.

This week is the 25th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act, which has critical provisions for Indian Country to

protect Native women. But more work must be done. The Violence Against Women Act was passed in the House in April of this year, and it has yet to see the light of day on the Senate side. That bears repeating: It has yet to see the light of day on the Senate side.

My first question is for Mr. Anderson. Thank you so much for being here with us from New Mexico. I introduced the Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety Act, which partly focuses on law enforcement data-sharing with tribes through the DOJ's Tribal Access Program, TAP is the acronym.

Your agency has previously stated that only about 75 out of 573 tribes will participate in TAP by the end of the 2019 fiscal year, and this seems really low. Do you believe that TAP is under-utilized by tribes? And why, in your opinion?

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Representative. TAP is a valuable tool to promote the sharing of information between tribal law enforcement and to obtain tribal law enforcement access to national criminal information databases.

My colleagues at the Office of Tribal Justice within the Department of Justice are proactively working to roll out the TAP to more tribes across the country. I expect that at this rate, we are getting it out to 25 tribes per year, and by the end of 2020 we hope to get TAP Light, which is the software exclusively, as opposed to the hardware, out to all tribes that have their own law enforcement agency. So, it is actively being pushed out.

In terms of being under-utilized, I think it depends on which tribe we are talking about. As a rule, I don't believe it is under-utilized. I think it has provided a valuable avenue for tribes and tribal law enforcement to obtain access to those national databases.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you. When you say that it is being rolled out to more tribes as we move forward, what is the application process like for tribes to participate in TAP each year? And do you believe that the application process is any type of barrier to their participation?

Mr. ANDERSON. No, Representative. The application process, there is an initial application that simply requests information about the tribal infrastructure, what type of tribal law enforcement exists, what type of administration capabilities there may be.

So, there is an initial, I wouldn't even call it an application. I would call it more of a vetting process to help the Department understand how the TAP can be utilized most effectively. I don't believe that consists or considers a substantial barrier to the tribal application and access to the TAP.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you. I am almost out of time. I will try to fit this last one in.

This is still for you, Mr. Anderson—the BADGES Act also requires BIA direct service officers and FBI agents with jurisdiction in Indian Country to report missing persons cases in the National Missing and Unidentified Person System Database since there are currently large gaps in data collection, making it difficult for Congress to know how expansive this issue really is.

Even though the FBI and BIA work together to process crime scenes and evidence collection, why do you believe the data collection is lacking? Where can these two departments improve their coordination to adequately collect evidence and data of these crimes?

Mr. ANDERSON. Representative, I think the data collection, where we are most in need of improvement is in facilitating the effective exchange of data between tribal law enforcement and the Federal law enforcement counterparts. I believe that the TAP certainly would help that. The expanded efforts to improve public awareness of and access to NamUs, and inputting data into NamUs, would also facilitate that exchange of information.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you. I yield, Chairman. Thank you for allowing me the time.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Representative. We will be doing a second round of questions, too, if you have follow-up questions.

I want to switch back to Mr. Anderson. Last December, the National Institute of Justice's Director of Investigative and Forensic Sciences, Gerald LaPorte, noted that Fiscal Year 2018 was the first time that the Office of Justice Programs received funding from the Crime Victims funds to meet the needs of Native victims.

Does that mean that before Fiscal Year 2018, there were no funds specifically allocated to meet the needs of Native victims of violence? And if so, why?

Mr. ANDERSON. Representative, I know that in Fiscal Year 2018 and in Fiscal Year 2019 there is a substantial set-aside from the office OVC funds, obviously, for tribal projects and to serve victims of crime within tribal communities. I believe there were funds before that, but I would have to confirm that for the Committee.

Mr. GALLEGO. If you find out, can you make sure you let my staff get that information?

Why do you believe you were sent as the designee from the National Institute of Justice if you cannot really speak to their operations? You have a lot of great experience, obviously, as a U.S. Attorney in New Mexico, a state that has many of our Tribal Nations. But it is odd that you were picked specifically because we really need more information when it comes to the National Institute of Justice.

In your opinion, did they tell you why?

Mr. ANDERSON. I am sorry, Congressman. Why I was sent today?

Mr. GALLEGO. Yes.

Mr. ANDERSON. I am heavily involved in the issues that the Committee is here to address today. I am active in the Native American Issues Subcommittee, very active in particular on the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. I like to think that I am generally knowledgeable about those issues. My knowledge is not perfect, but I suppose I was deemed a suitable candidate because of my overall involvement in these issues.

Mr. GALLEGO. Yes. No doubt you are very knowledgeable. Like I say, we have a lot of questions that would have been, I think, better answered by somebody from the National Institute of Justice. But in terms of your personal experience, you are very well-grounded there.

In total, how much money was awarded from the Crime Victims fund?

Mr. ANDERSON. Congressman, I believe it was approximately \$100 million. I know, of the set-aside last year—

Mr. GALLEGO. Do you know how long these grants go for? Is there a shelf life to them?

Mr. ANDERSON. I don't believe there is. I believe they are no year funds.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK. Do you know—

Mr. ANDERSON. Three years.

Mr. GALLEGO. Three years? OK. Do you know who some of these awardees are? And what type of programs are they specifically funding?

Mr. ANDERSON. The OVC, the Office of Victims of Crimes funds, Congressman?

Mr. GALLEGO. Yes.

Mr. ANDERSON. They can fund any type of program that is directly related to victims of crime. They are subject to applications, but any type of program, as long as it directly serves victims of crime, is eligible for funding under the OVC programs.

Mr. GALLEGO. I am now more speaking to your experience as a U.S. Attorney of New Mexico. As you are aware, there have been jurisdictional challenges that have impeded the prosecution of cases in the past, allowing crime against Indigenous communities to go unpunished.

What steps has your office taken to improve prosecution of these crimes and reduce barriers to enforcement in Indian Country? And what can you recommend that other offices do the same as yours?

Mr. ANDERSON. Congressman, are you referring specifically to jurisdictional challenges or challenges more broadly of prosecutions in Indian Country?

Mr. GALLEGO. Both. Let's just hit both.

Mr. ANDERSON. Certainly. On the jurisdictional front, one of the important things that we do is collaborate with our state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners. Given that New Mexico has a substantial number of Pueblos, and we also have the Navajo Nation, it is important for us, in identifying where a crime occurred, that we have effective communication and collaboration with those state, local, and tribal partners.

The number of cases in my office really turn on the actual location of the offense and whether that is within the boundaries of a Pueblo or Indian Country, as the term is defined by statute. So, one of the most effective tools we have is that collaboration and identifying those boundaries and working with state, local, and tribal partners.

I would also point to the cross-commissioning that we do under a special law enforcement commission to allow those state and local partners to enforce Federal law along with our Federal law enforcement partners, and that ameliorates some of the jurisdictional challenges we face.

Mr. GALLEGO. I now yield to Delegate San Nicolas.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Addington, I wanted to follow up on a statement you made earlier when responding to questions from Chairman Grijalva. You mentioned that there are impediments to law enforcement recruitment with respect to getting individuals to do that job in Indian Country. Can you elaborate on what those impediments are and what the possible solutions could be for us to be able to fix that problem?

Mr. ADDINGTON. You bet. Thanks for that question. One of the things that we are seeing is just that nobody wants to get into public safety any more like they used to years ago. That is one of the biggest things that we are seeing, the applicant pool is just not there for positions.

We advertise a position—where we used to get maybe 15, 20 people on an applicant list, now we are maybe getting 1 or 2, and it may be somebody that cannot pass a background. Of course, that person will not be able to go into that position because they cannot pass a background. So, the No. 1 thing that we are seeing is there are not enough applicants. There is not enough interest of getting into public safety programs out there.

Then on the other side, there are a couple other things. The salary ranges for tribal law enforcement, BIA law enforcement, is lower than most other programs. They can go to work for a county, or a city, or another agency and make more money working, get better equipment, different things.

That is one of the other obstacles that we have. We train folks, and then they go to work at another program as well. But I think the No. 1 thing that we are having a problem with is just getting people interested in getting into public safety in general.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. When you mentioned that the salary for BIA law enforcement is low, is that relative to other law enforcement positions that are outside of BIA?

Mr. ADDINGTON. That is correct. It would be like other Federal programs. We are maybe a grade step lower than our Federal counterparts doing the same or similar job in another Federal program. But like counties, states, some of those programs pay well above what the tribal law enforcement program pays because their salary is based upon the allocations that they receive to run their programs.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. When was the last time we have had a wage study done for BIA law enforcement?

Mr. ADDINGTON. I don't know that there has been a specific wage study done. I know we have looked at our salary ranges a couple different times. We did a full "Protecting Indian Country" report back in 2010. And then we looked at it again a year and a half ago, and still determined that the tribal and BIA law enforcement's salaries are lower than other programs.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. But those evaluations and determinations are all internal?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Yes.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. BIA has not engaged the services of a third party wage study professional firm to be able to evaluate whether or not BIA law enforcement wages are maintained at the national average? I mean, if we are paying law enforcement on BIA below the national average, then it helps to really explain why we are having crime rates over the national average. So, we have not engaged a third party wage expert to be able to evaluate the wages of BIA law enforcement?

Mr. ADDINGTON. We have not went to a third party or anything. And it depends on where you are at across the country, too. Some places we are comparable or we may be above what a county sheriff's department is actually making. So, it is relative to where



you are across Indian Country as well. It is not across the board. Every location is either being paid less or more. So, it depends on what region you are in and what area as well.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. If the law enforcement salaries on the BIA side are below what they typically would get even in other Federal law enforcement positions, how is that salary range even determined?

Mr. ADDINGTON. It is determined on the GS scale and by the appropriations that we have for each one of those programs.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GALLEGO. I now recognize Chairman Grijalva.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you very much in the reaction from all three witnesses. And I appreciate your time very much.

It is unfortunate, as the Chairman pointed out, that the National Institute of Justice is not here. There are a lot of other pertinent questions that we have that should have been directed to them.

But let's just talk about some issues that are part and parcel to the whole discussion. My colleague, Ms. Haaland, illustrated the piece of legislation that she has and that we support. But in terms of legislation, where we deal with issues such as salary parity, even within our own jurisdiction, this Committee, we have law enforcement in our national parks.

And I think that is a fair comparison, if one exists, that salary parity is an impediment to recruitment and retention. I think we need to look at that. And I appreciate that information, so that would be mandated.

We would be mandating issues in legislation and codifying, mandating the points that the Ranking Member brought up about data sharing as a mandate, and as a mandate, the coordination and collaboration of interagency efforts. And victim support, training, and support for victims' families and tribal communities would be part of something mandated, which is all part of discussions and legislation that is going around.

Your reaction to the process that you are undertaking, with no reflection one way or another on my part, and a mandated legislation that has a timeline when this has to be implemented. Your reaction to that?

I know it is a general question, but something that I think we have to also look at in this discussion is what legislatively can we do to prod this forward and to set some expectation and a timeline rather than to continue to have updates that frustrate some of the Members, and certainly myself, in terms of what movement we are making. At least we have a benchmark. Your reaction to that?

Mr. ADDINGTON. I think data collection is one of the things that we need to do promptly. I think there needs to be a timeline on what data is being collected, and it is mandatory that we are collecting that data so we know we can use that information to identify crime trends and what is going on out there. I am in full support of timelines on implementing new fields of data so we can share that data and collect it from everybody.

Mr. GRIJALVA. One of the mandates, of course, would have to be resources to support whatever legislative initiative.

Mr. ADDINGTON. Correct.

Ms. HOVLAND. And if I can add, sir—

Mr. GRIJALVA. Please.

Ms. HOVLAND [continuing]. One of the other barriers we have been identifying in our visits in the urban Native centers is having a uniform code for when data is collected at screening so that they can transfer to other data systems and it is a standard code, as well as having—a lot of our Native peoples are classified incorrectly at screenings because sometimes there is not “American Indian, Alaska Native, or Pacific Islander” on there. So, that is another area that needs to be looked at also so that we can get better representation at screenings.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Chairman.

I now recognize Representative Haaland.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you, Chairman.

I have one last question for Mr. Anderson. As you are aware, urban areas like Albuquerque, where you are based, have high numbers of urban Indians due to the surrounding tribal lands, and jobs, of course. Has your agency done any work to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women crisis in urban locations with high populations of Native Americans, or have suggestions about what can be done to help reduce the number of missing and trafficked Native women even though it is outside Indian Country?

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Representative. And the last point you make is an important one, given our limited criminal jurisdiction in Indian Country. And when we deal with Native populations and crimes committed against Native populations that live in urban areas, obviously the principal law enforcement responsibility falls to the state and local authorities.

In terms of what we can do to facilitate communication, the types of things we’ve been discussing today in the nature of information-sharing are going to be our principal priorities there, so developing protocols to ensure that information is shared between tribal law enforcement and local law enforcement, be it in Albuquerque or any other metropolitan area we may be talking about.

I think that type of consistent information-sharing, consistent protocols and procedures as between tribal law enforcement and local, would go a long way toward addressing the type of missing persons issue we’ve been talking about today.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you.

Mr. Addington, before I was sworn in to Congress, I attended the Senate’s oversight hearing on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. That was back in December. Senator Udall, who has been a great lead on this issue in New Mexico, cited “poor coordination, limited data, and insufficient resources” as barriers to solving these cases during that hearing.

Your testimony also implies better interagency coordination and communication is needed. What has the BIA done since the December Senate hearing to improve interagency coordination, and what more efforts are needed from the FBI to assist your agency?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Thank you for that question. We work very closely with the FBI’s Indian Country unit on these issues. I talk to staff in that unit, if not weekly, every other week or every couple of weeks on Indian Country issues. So, we do coordinate on response as well locally. We are actually working with our local FBI

partners out in our service agencies to where we are coordinating and collaborating on making sure we get the proper response to these reports that come in for missing persons.

And just an example: In 1 month, we had 80 missing person reports that came in to one of our police departments, or a couple of them, in Montana in a month. And the coordination since then with the FBI and our other local partners has just greatly increased, and we were able to recover and find all of these missing persons.

And it still goes on today. We still have a high number of missing person reports that come in, and by our collaborating better with our other partners, we are able to respond to those more quickly and we are able to recover those folks in a short time period.

So, I think since the last hearing, just us talking with our other Federal, state, and local partners, and the great work of the U.S. Attorney's Office Native American Subcommittee—and we have been attending those meetings with them. They have put a lot of different training sessions in place, where we can talk and collaborate in those efforts as well.

I think we are getting to where we need to be to make sure that we are responding to these cases and getting the adequate representation for those victims.

Ms. HAALAND. OK. Thank you. And it is ironic that the FBI, when they first became an agency, one of the first big cases that they solved were the Osage murders in Oklahoma Indian Country. And I think it is interesting that that is the first thing they did to really hone their skills as a bureau. And, again, we have Indian Country crimes that need to be solved.

Do you believe the FBI is making adequate effort to assist in coordinating, collecting data, and providing resources to Indian Country, for these Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women cases?

Mr. ADDINGTON. Thanks for that question. I think it depends on the area. We have some areas where we have great FBI counterpart agents that are there that work with us. And it depends on, as it does with the BIA, the workload, where you are at, what is going on, on the resources that are available.

So, I think they do really well in some areas, and it is no different than the tribal law enforcement program or our programs. Some areas we still struggle just because maybe we don't have enough resources that are actually assigned to that area, and we work on trying to coordinate our efforts to make sure that one of us is responding and able to focus on those types of cases.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you very much. Chairman, I yield, and thank you for the time.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Representative Haaland.

I now recognize Ranking Member Cook.

Mr. COOK. Thank you very much. It is very, very frustrating because this is a huge problem, more so for the members of the audience and the tribes than me. But I don't know how to fix this. I wish I had some grand solution to it. I think Congress has to be more involved.

I was mulling over in this pea brain of mine about ways on how we could get attention, and I almost asked the Committee to take

a look at what the military has done, the House Armed Services Committee. They have what is called a combat readiness evaluation, a unit readiness. Basically, it is a report card.

And when this first came in and I was in the military, I hated it. I thought, how can they do this? This is micro-managing. But it forced you to do certain things in terms of whether money was being allocated in certain areas, reporting efficiency, things like that, and how you would do this. The only reason it was successful, it was a Federal program. It is not like you are asking one state to do it, or a city, or what have you.

So, if these statistics do not improve, I suggest that we are going to have to have some type of evaluation system to see where the shortfalls are, even if it is incumbent upon this Committee or the Congress as a whole to do that. Because we cannot continue with these tragic situations where the bubble does not seem to be moving in terms of improvement. And I echo some of the statements.

But I think there were a lot of things that came out today. This has been a hearing which—it is depressing. It is depressing for everybody in the audience. But it is a hearing that has to be held because you are never going to make corrections or you are never going to address the situation.

And, obviously, maybe the bottom line of this is, hey, this is going to stay on the radar. We have to continue to find ways to improve this because right now innocent people are dying, missing, and our job here, even more so than you, we have to do something about it.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Ranking Member Cook.

Prior to closing, I do want to say this is our second hearing, and I do appreciate the efforts that have occurred thus far. But we want to see more beyond listening sessions. We want to see actions. If there needs to be follow-up legislation, we will be here to be supportive of legislation.

Obviously, we would rather see things move faster and actually have a process and protocols instituted at the Department levels. But this is something that this Subcommittee is not going to let go. We cannot allow women, thousands of women, to be disappearing a year. And it is certainly our trust responsibility here in Congress to make sure we do something about it. So, there will be follow up to this, and I hope to have a successful conversation next time about how we have improved the situation.

I thank our panelists, our expert witnesses, for their insightful testimony, and Members for their questions. The members of the Committee may have some additional questions for the witnesses, and we will ask you to respond to those in writing.

Under Committee Rule 3(o), members of the Committee must submit witness questions within 3 business days following a hearing, and the hearing record will be held open for 10 business days for these responses.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:29 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]