

**STATE OF ALASKA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

2019

Source
HR 10

**House
Resolve No.**
9



Urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 without an exemption for tribal governments in the state and to support Savanna's Act and highlight the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

WHEREAS, compared to the national average, Indigenous women face the highest rates of violence per capita of any group; and

WHEREAS the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that, in 2016, homicide was the third leading cause of death among Indigenous girls and women between the ages of 10 and 24; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, funded by the National Institute of Justice, reported that more than four in five, or 84.3 percent of, Indigenous women experience violence in their lives; and

WHEREAS the 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey reported that 56.1 percent of Alaska Native and American Indian women experience sexual violence, 55.5 percent experience physical violence by intimate partners, and 48 percent have been

stalked in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS the 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey reported that Alaska Native and American Indian women are almost twice as likely to experience violence and face murder rates more than 10 times the national average; and

WHEREAS a November 2018 report by the Urban Indian Health Institute titled "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls" found that there is a significant lack of meaningful government data documenting the rates of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2018 Urban Indian Health Institute report, the National Crime Information Center reported that there were 5,712 reports of missing Alaska Native and American Indian women in 2016, but only 116 of those reports were entered in the United States Department of Justice's federal missing persons database that year; and

WHEREAS no database in the United States exists to track the number of Indigenous women who have been abducted or murdered, creating gaps in reporting across the nation; and

WHEREAS, according to the Urban Indian Health Institute report, Alaska has the fourth-highest number of missing and murdered Indigenous women in the nation, despite the state's small population; and

WHEREAS the Urban Indian Health Institute report found that Anchorage ranks third highest in the nation for the number of cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous women that are not included in law enforcement records; and

WHEREAS efforts are underway throughout the state to raise public awareness of the lack of information and resources available to support the families of missing or murdered Indigenous women; and

WHEREAS multiple federal studies, including a 2013 report from the Indian Law and Order Commission, have concluded that significant reform to tribal, state, and federal laws is required to better protect families living in rural areas in the state by creating sufficient local capacity for law enforcement and justice systems; and

WHEREAS, although the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act included expanded jurisdictions and additional resources to address violence against Indigenous women, tribal governments in the state cannot take advantage of these changes

because of existing jurisdictional complexities; and

WHEREAS the House of Representatives recognizes the current national and statewide crisis regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women, which has debilitating effects on both urban and rural communities, as the crisis normalizes violence against Indigenous women in this country, and recognizes many of these women are invisible in data and media;

BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives expresses its gratitude and appreciation to the devoted members of the Indigenous community for their perseverance in bringing attention to this crisis; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges members of the United States Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act without exemption for Alaska and Alaska tribal governments; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges members of the United States Congress to pass Savanna's Act to address the need for tribal access to national missing persons databases; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives joins tribal and local governments and all other interested stakeholders in raising awareness of the information deficit and limited resources available for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable William Barr, Attorney General of the United States; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.