

Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act with Strong Tribal Provisions for Native Women

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) addresses violence and sexual assault by providing the resources and services necessary for public safety. This bill is especially significant for Native American communities, which deal with domestic and sexual violence at unparalleled rates.

Because 97 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women who are victims of violence have experienced that violence at the hands of a non-Native perpetrator, expanding tribal jurisdiction over non-Native assailants is necessary for seeking justice for victims.

In the last Congress, the House passed a strong VAWA reauthorization bill (H.R. 1585) that expands tribal jurisdiction to include sexual assault, sex trafficking, stalking, assault on law enforcement officers, and child abuse, in addition to domestic violence. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to act to reauthorize VAWA in the last Congress.

Congress needs to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act quickly. We urge you to support the reauthorization of VAWA with at least the same tribal jurisdiction provisions that are included in H.R. 1620.

Congress must pass a VAWA reauthorization bill with strong tribal provisions that will:

- » Protect Native victims of sexual assault and keep Native children safe from violence by expanding tribal jurisdiction over non-Native perpetrators.
- » Promote tribal access to federal criminal databases.
- » Create a protocol for responding to missing persons cases.
- » Improve coordination and response rates across multiple jurisdictions involved in investigating cases of missing and murdered victims.
- » Protect tribal law enforcement from violence as they work to keep the community safe.

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