



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Mexico Indian Affairs Department and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force issues statement in support of the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act

SANTA FE - The New Mexico Indian Affairs Department (IAD) and the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives (MMIWR) Task Force issued statements on Friday commending the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization Act of 2022, which reauthorized all current VAWA grant programs until 2027 while also increasing authorization levels in many cases.

This bipartisan bill includes important [provisions](#) that increase Tribal communities' access to federal resources and data. Most notably the provisions in 'Sec. 804. Tribal Jurisdiction over Covered Crimes', which the MMIWR Task Force addressed in its [2020 Final Report](#). The funding provided by this law will go a long way to position Tribes to exercise their inherent authority which historically has faced many obstacles, including legal impediments, limited personnel and training, and the great need for resources.

“We commend the Biden-Harris Administration's historic decision to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA has played a critical role in bolstering and improving the protection of Indigenous women and children,” said State of New Mexico **Indian Affairs Cabinet Secretary and NM MMIWR Task Force Chairwoman Lynn Trujillo**. “The restored authority in VAWA expands Tribes’ legal authority to keep their communities safe, and provides adequate resources to support healing and justice for everyone impacted by violence. This life saving legislation is a significant step toward protecting Indigenous women, men, children and LGBT2S+ relatives against all forms of violence.”

“We express our deepest gratitude to the Biden-Harris Administration for reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act and recognizing that all persons, including Tribal

women and children, have the right to live violence-free lives. Through the initiatives of the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force, we heard countless stories of the pain of victims, survivors, and their families due to violent acts. The reauthorization ensures that survivors in New Mexico, including the Navajo Nation receive the resources they deserve to restore, heal, and reunite loved ones. The reauthorization is a major victory for all of Indian Country, especially those who have long advocated and supported the Act,” said **Navajo Nation First Lady Phefelia Nez**.

“The recent passage and signing of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization Act of 2022, which reauthorizes VAWA through 2027, ensures that survivors have access to life-saving services and that our local communities will continue to work to improve the responsiveness of systems to the needs of survivors. This reauthorization is the most comprehensive, trauma informed, survivor centered package, recognizing the needs of individual survivors,” said **New Mexico Crimes Victims Reparation Commission Bureau Chief MaryEllen Garcia**. “This acts now includes provisions that restore critical categories of our Tribal criminal justice systems that will protect our Native relatives in cases of sexual assault, stalking, sex trafficking, and child violence.”

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse and needs resources, you can call the National Domestic Violence 24/7 hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or StrongHearts Native Helpline, Monday - Friday 7:00 am - 10:00 pm (CST), at 1-844-762-8483.

National and Statewide Domestic Violence Resources:

[New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence \(nmcadv.org\)](https://nmcadv.org)

[StrongHearts Native Helpline | For Supporters \(strongheartshelpline.org\)](https://strongheartshelpline.org)

[Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women – CSVANW](https://www.csvanw.org)

[Healthy relationships for young adults | love is respect](https://www.loveisrespect.org)

[Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking Helpline \(newmexicolegalaid.org\)](https://www.newmexicolegalaid.org)

[New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc. \(nmcsap.org\)](https://www.nmcsap.org)

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