



Update on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force



Picture By: UNM Center for Social Policy and UNM Native American Budget & Policy Institute

6th Meeting of the Indian Affairs Committee
November 20, 2019

Secretary Lynn Trujillo
Senior Policy Analyst Stephanie Salazar



Summary of House Bill 278

- Sponsors: Representatives Andrea Romero, Derrick J. Lente, Melanie A. Stansbury, and Wonda Johnson
- One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) was appropriated from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department for expenditure in fiscal years 2019 and 2020.
- The legislation requires the taskforce to produce a final report with findings and recommendations no later than November 21, 2020.



HB 278 Requirements

- HB 278 requires the task force to:
 - Determine how to increase state resources for reporting and identifying MMIW;
 - Collaborate with tribal law enforcement agencies to determine the scope of the problem and identify barriers to address the problem;
 - Create partnerships that will improve the reporting and investigation of MMIW;
 - Work with tribal governments; and
 - Collaborate with the DOJ to improve how information, such as reports and investigations, are processed and shared.



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Appointment of Task Force Members

- The legislation identified 11 members to serve on the task force.
- Outreach to all potential candidates began in May 2019.
- All names were submitted to the Governor's office on July 16, 2019.
- Task force members were appointed on October 9, 2019.
- The task force held its first meeting on November 8, 2019.



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MMIW Task Force Members

- Secretary Lynn Trujillo (*Department of Indian Affairs*)
- Secretary Mark Shea (*Department of Public Safety*)
- Kathy Howkumi (*Acting Victim Assistant Program Supervisor*)
- Becky Johnson (*Navajo Nation*)
- Beata Tsosie (*Santa Clara Pueblo*)
- Sharnen Velarde (*Jicarilla Apache Nation*)
- Bernalyn Via (*Mescalero Apache Tribe*)
- First Lady Phefelia Nez (*Navajo Nation*)
- Matthew Strand (*DNA People's Legal Services*)
- Linda Son-Stone (*First Nations*)
- Elizabeth Gonzales (*Office of Medical Investigator*)



IAD's Goals for the MMIW Task Force

- **Goal 1:** To understand the full extent of the MMIWG crisis in our state and to develop recommendations that systematically document the issue.
- **Goal 2:** To ensure that the Native community has a meaningful opportunity to speak about this issue.



IAD Activities to Support MMIW Task Force

- Outreach to advocates and other experts in the community to seek guidance about task force activities.
- Hired a Project Assistant for the MMIW Task Force.
- Began gathering research, reports, and testimony to inform the work of the task force.
- Attended community events that explore the issue of MMIW in NM.



First MMIW Convening

- The first meeting of the task force was held on November 8, 2019.
- All task force members were present, along with around 70 public participants.
- The task force explored several questions about:
 - Scope of work
 - Goals of the task force
 - Identifying potential partners
 - How to engage survivors of violence
 - Resources for understanding the crisis

First MMIW Task Force Meeting – November 8, 2019





Initial Feedback

- *When working with victims and survivors, we must ensure that we don't "use" their stories. What will we do with this information, how will we hold that in a good way?*
- *Highlight and show where the system is falling short and denying services to victims.*
- *We need to figure out how to make sure different law enforcement agencies are working together and sharing data.*
- *Gallup Womens' Shelter just closed; we need to put more funding to these shelters. Women need a safe place to go.*



Next Steps

- The next meeting will be held in December 2019.
- The task force will develop a work plan at the next meeting.
- Subcommittees will also be formed in the next couple weeks to begin discussing components of the MMIW Crisis, such as:
 - Data gathering
 - Jurisdiction challenges
 - Collecting survivor testimony
 - Stakeholder involvement



Existing Challenges

- Task force members were surveyed and expressed the following challenges:
 - *Our time commitments to other items beyond the task force. We need a strategy that makes the best use of our time.*
 - *Different understanding of the crisis. Different opinions about what work to undertake---different priorities.*
 - *The task force's ability to complete the objectives of the legislation.*



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Special Appropriation Request

- The Indian Affairs Department also made a special appropriation request for \$75,000 to continue the work of the task force from July 1, 2020 to November 1, 2020.
- The current appropriation will expire on June 30, 2020.



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Questions?



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Thank you!

We welcome your feedback and participation in future task force meetings.

If you would like to be added to the MMIW Task Force Listserv please contact:

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