

Bill Providing Additional Support for Not Invisible Act Commission's Activities to Address MMIP Signed into Law

Category: Policy Blog

written by Chelsea Gutierrez | April 10, 2023

On [December 22, 2022](#), the House of Representatives passed Bill [S.5087](#), an amendment to the [Not Invisible Act of 2019](#). The Act was created to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP) crisis in the United States, through the creation of a commission or advisory committee. S.5087 extends the Commission and its termination deadline by an additional 18 months. The deadline for the Commission to make available and submit recommendations to establish best practices for state, tribal, and federal law enforcement, was also extended from 18 months to now a total of 36 months by this bill. Additionally, this amendment will provide more support to the Commission through enabling them to accept and use gifts or donations from Indian Tribes or tribal entities, academic institutions, or non-profit organizations to carry out their duties as outlined in the Act. [It was then signed by President Biden on January 5, 2023](#), becoming [Public Law No. 117-359](#).

Background

The Department of Interior and Department of Justice Joint Commission on Reducing Violent Crime Against American Indians and Alaska Natives was created in the original *Not Invisible Act of 2019*, authored by then-Rep. Deb Haaland and sponsored by Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV). The Commission is composed of law enforcement, tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, and most importantly – survivors. The purpose of the Commission is to improve federal and tribal coordination efforts and establish best practices to reduce violent crime within Indian lands and against Indians. This will be done by the commission creating recommendations, making them publicly available, and submitting them to:

- the Secretary of the Interior
- the Attorney General
- the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate
- the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate
- the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and
- the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives

In late February of this year, [the first in-person plenary session](#) of the Not Invisible Act Commission was held at the U.S. Department of the Interior and hosted by Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco and Secretary Deb Haaland. During consultations, the Department of Justice was able to use information obtained through consultations with Tribal representatives and subject-matter experts to secure more Indian country law enforcement resources to address the MMIP crisis in fiscal year 2023. Attorney General Monaco also emphasized the Department's commitment to offer support and partnership to the Commission during its recommendation process.

Commission Hearings to Gather Input on Crisis Response Recommendations

Through the work of six subcommittees, the Commission is developing recommendations to improve coordination and improve best practices to bolster resources for survivors and victim's families, and

to combat the epidemic of missing persons, murder, and trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Natives. The subcommittees have selected specific locations to hold field hearings to hear directly from the public in areas most affected by the MMIP crisis:

April:

- Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Anchorage, Alaska

May:

- Flagstaff, Arizona

June:

- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Northern California
- Albuquerque, New Mexico

July:

- Billings, Montana

Recently, the commission [released details](#) about their first hearing in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It will be held on April 11, discussing the topic of “Law Enforcement and Investigative Resources to Identify and Respond to Cases of MMIP and HT.” A national, virtual field hearing will be held later in Summer 2023 with details to follow. The hearings will have panel discussions and a public comment period. Specific topics, as well as logistical details and information, will be provided to the public as the date of each hearing approaches. The information gathered during these field hearings will be used in the Commission’s final report to Secretary Haaland, Attorney General Merrick Garland, and Congress.