

HHS Responds to Not Invisible Action Commission Findings and Recommendations with Plan to Support Urban Indian Communities in Combating the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Crisis

Category: Policy Blog

written by Alex Sampson | January 15, 2025

On November 15, 2024, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released HHS' [supplemental response](#) to the [Not Invisible Act Commission's](#) ("Commission") [findings and recommendations](#) on how to combat the missing and murdered Indigenous people (MMIP) and human trafficking crisis. The Commission's findings and recommendations and the supplemental response by HHS mention urban Indian organizations (UIOs) and urban American Indian and Alaska Native people and communities. Importantly, HHS states that the [National Center for Child Fatality Review and Prevention](#)—"which provides technical assistance to state and local entities in conducting child death reviews, inclusive of AI/AN populations"—plans to "engage experts at Urban Indian Health Centers to create and implement a plan for also engaging [American Indian and Alaska Native] families living off Tribal lands."

Read the HHS Full Supplemental Response [here](#).

Background on the Commission

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) along with other national Native organizations worked in support of the [Not Invisible Act legislation](#), which was enacted in October 2020. The Act required the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Attorney General to establish and appoint a joint commission on violent crime against American Indian and Alaska Native people. Secretary of the Interior Haaland was the lead sponsor of the *Not Invisible Act* when she served in Congress. The bill was passed unanimously by voice vote in both chambers of Congress.

Commissioner Sonya Tetnowski is a citizen of the Makah Tribe and CEO of the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley. She currently serves as the President California Consortium of Urban Indian Health (CCUIH) and previously served as NCUIH's Board President. Ms. Tetnowski works daily in support of the health and wellness services to American Indians and Alaska Natives living in urban areas. Violence against American Indians and Alaska Natives is a public health crisis and is considered a social determinant of health (SDOH). NCUIH is committed to the reduction of violence impacting Native communities.

NCUIH Resources:

- [Read NCUIH's analysis of the Department of Justice and Department of Interior's responses to the Commission's findings and recommendations](#) (June 4, 2024)
- [PRESS RELEASE: NCUIH Welcomes Not Invisible Act Commission Report to Congress and Administration](#) (November 17, 2023)