NCUIH-Endorsed Bipartisan Legislation Aimed at Strengthening Tribal Public Safety Passes Senate

Category: Policy Blog
written by Jeremy Grabiner | December 17, 2025

On December 12, 2025, the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH)-endorsed legislation, the Bridging Agency Data Gaps & Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act (S.390) unanimously passed the Senate and will now head to the House. Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-N.V.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.), Ruben Gallego (D-A.Z.) and Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) reintroduced this bipartisan legislation on February 4, 2025, which is aimed at strengthening Tribal public safety.

Specifically, the bill:

1. Requires law enforcement agencies to report on cases of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP).
2. Establish a grant program to support states, Tribes, and Tribal organizations in the coordination of efforts related to missing and murdered persons cases and sexual assault cases.
3. Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) are eligible entities for the missing or murdered response coordination grant program established by this bill. This could allow UIOs to establish and grow programs to assist in developing coordinated responses and investigations for MMIP.
4. Increase Tribal access to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) by requiring Tribal facilitators to conduct ongoing Tribal outreach and serve as a point of contact for Tribes and law enforcement agencies, as well as conduct training and information gathering to improve the resolution of missing persons cases.
5. Require a report on Tribal law enforcement needs, including staffing, replacement and repairs for corrections facilities, infrastructure and capital for Tribal police and court facilities, and emergency communication technology.
6. Evaluate federal law enforcement evidence collection, handling, and processing crucial to securing conviction of violent offenders.

Read the bill text here.

Background

Missing and murdered Indigenous peoples (MMIP) is a crisis that refers to the disproportionate amount of violence and abuse that affects American Indian and Alaska Native people in the United States. NCUIH surveyed UIO leaders in 2019 on the biggest risk factors leading to American Indian and Alaska Native patients missing in their communities, and 66 percent said it was a combination of homelessness, foster system transitioning, domestic violence, substance misuse, and human trafficking, among others. According to the California Consortium of Urban Indian Health's Red Women Rising initiative, 65 percent of urban Indian women experienced interpersonal violence, 40 percent experienced multiple forms of violence, and 48 percent experienced sexual assault.

Furthermore, an October 2021 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on missing or murdered Indigenous women noted that "tribal organization officials told [GAO] that AI/AN

individuals who leave rural villages to move to urban, non-Tribal areas are at a higher risk of becoming victims to violent crime, including human trafficking, which they stated is a serious concern related to the MMIP crisis. In 2020, the Not Invisible Act Commission, a commission of law enforcement, Tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, family members of missing and murdered individuals, and survivors established by the passage of the No Invisible Act of 2019, published a report urging Congress and the Administration to take action to address the related crises of MMIP and human trafficking of Indigenous person. The *BADGES for Native Communities Act* is a response to the report published by the Not Invisible Act Commission.