



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PHX-16-077

### TITLE: Addressing Crisis of Missing and Murdered Native Women

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#### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

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**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, on some reservations American Indian and Alaska Native women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide is the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women between 10 and 24 years of age and the fifth leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age; and

**WHEREAS**, Hanna Harris of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Tribe was 21 years old when she went missing on July 4, 2013 and, due to the inadequate response of the justice system, her family and friends searched for Hanna, led a march for justice for Hanna's murder and for other unresolved murders of American Indian women; and

**WHEREAS**, RoyLynn Rides Horse of the Crow Tribe was beaten, burned and left for dead, and walked several miles before collapsing and due to inadequate response of the justice system to investigate RoyLynn's case, the Crow Tribe also led a march for justice on June 16, 2016; and

**WHEREAS**, on the day RoyLynn Rides Horse passed over the Montana congressional delegation introduced a resolution to designate May 5, 2017 as National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, which seeks to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women; and

**WHEREAS**, over 175 tribal, state, regional, and national organizations have joined with the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center in support of the resolution to create a National Day of Awareness for Missing Native Women and Girls; and

**WHEREAS**, the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, and 2013, directed the Attorney General, acting through the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), to conduct a program of research to develop a more comprehensive understanding of violence against Native women, specifically including murder of Native women.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians does hereby support the congressional resolution creating a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby resolve to call upon the Department of Justice to fully implement the VAWA 2005 program of research and specifically provide Indian tribes information regarding the disappearance and murder of Native women; and

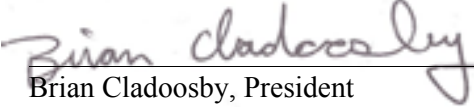
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby resolve to advocate for changes to increase safety for Native women to address the crisis of missing and murdered Native women and girls by the federal government, with agencies including but not limited to the Departments of Justice, Interior, and Health and Human Services including actions, such as:

1. To review, revise, and create law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to the disappearance of Native women and girls, including inter-jurisdictional issues; and
2. To provide increased victim services to the families and community members of the disappeared or murdered Native women such as counseling for the children of the disappeared, burial assistance and community walks and healing ceremonies; and
3. Coordination of efforts across federal departments to increase the response to the disappearance or murder of Native women and girls; and
4. Coordinate in consultation with Indian tribes efforts to increase the response of state governments, where appropriate, to cases of disappearance or murder of Native women or girls; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2016 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Phoenix Convention Center, October 9<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> 2016, with a quorum present.

  
Brian Cladoosby, President

**ATTEST:**

  
Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary