

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Valerie Nagle. I am Ahtna Athabascan enrolled in Chugach Alaska Corporation. My mother, Violet Jackson Nagle, and her twin, Marion, were born in Valdez, AK in 1927. Their mother, Maude Morning Jackson, was born in Copper Center, or Kluti Kah, in 1899.

I am writing to express my support for H.R. 5444 the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act. A full investigation of every institution is in order. I would like to find where my Aunt Marion is buried. I believe that every institution needs to be a monument to those affected and their families in the same vein as European Holocaust Memorials; so Genocide is discontinued and it never happens again.

Maude Jackson was a Fisher, Trapper with a dog team, and a tailor. She taught her daughters Ahtna Language and culture and sent them to the regular school in Valdez. She made sure to take them to church there. My mom told me these stories through tears. She could only talk about it when she was drunk. Violet and Marion Jackson were taken from their home in Valdez in 1938 and sent to Sheldon Jackson Indian Boarding School in Sitka. The twins were immediately separated, and they were separated from their teenaged sisters, Katherine and Lillian, as well. Mom described being cold and hungry and not allowed to speak to any of her sisters. They were denied food as punishment. Marion got sick and died at the school in 1938 or 1939. Several times, I asked about a photo of a teacher and some students. Mom told me that that teacher beat a student and the student died. Aunt Katherine told me about being severely punished because of her attitude. She was a teen excelling in school and she had a job when they were taken to Indian Boarding School. "Kill the Indian" meant the already present internalized racism was cemented into the girl's minds and was projected at their mother. Normal teen angst was converted into hate. Aunt Lillian destroyed all but one photo of Maude Jackson. Three remaining sisters chose to keep their children in the dark about being Ahtna Athabascan as much as possible. My mom didn't specify that we were Native until I was about 11 years old. I am the last surviving sibling. My oldest sister has been missing since 1974. My brother killed himself earlier that year. My other brother died of a heroin overdose in 1994 and other sister died of lung cancer in 1997. Mom passed away in 2008 with lung cancer.

I reiterate my support for "H.R. 5444 the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act". I feel that it's important to acknowledge the Atrocities and seek justice for Survivors and Descendants.

Thank you to the Natural Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States

Sincerely,

Valerie Nagle