

Chairman: Rep Raul M. Grijalva
The House of Natural Resources Committee

I request your support on the passage of HR 5444 Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act.

We have a right to know the truth of what happened in Indian boarding schools in the United States.

Over the course of a century, hundreds of thousands of our children were taken or coerced away from our families and Tribes and forced to attend government-sanctioned Indian boarding schools. These schools were tools of assimilation and cultural genocide, resulting in the loss of language and culture and the permanent separation of children from their families. To date, there has never been an accounting of:

- the number of children forced to attend these schools;
- the number of children who were abused, died, or went missing while at these schools; and
- the long-term impacts on the children and the families of children forced to attend Indian boarding schools.

We have a limited amount of time to hear directly from survivors and record their stories. A Congressional Commission is needed to locate and analyze the records from the 367+ known Indian boarding schools that operated in the U.S. A Commission would also bring together boarding school survivors with a broad cross-section of tribal representatives and experts in education, health, and children and families to fully express and understand the impacts of this federal policy of Indian child removal.

I thank you in advance for your support of HR 5444 Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act.