



Support Senate Bill 22-150

End the Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives

Sponsors: Senator Jessie Danielson
Representatives Monica Duran and Leslie Herod

SB22-150 would create an Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIR) to improve coordination, response, communication, and awareness of MMIR cases.

Issue: More than **4 out of 5 Indigenous people in the U.S. experience violent crime** during their lifetime, a rate disproportionately higher than any other segment of the population.¹ Approximately half of Indigenous women have experienced sexual violence, physical violence by an intimate partner, and stalking. Among Indigenous men, 27% have experienced sexual violence, 43% experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, and 19% experienced stalking. The murder rate of Indigenous women is almost three times higher than that of non-Hispanic white women and is the 3rd leading cause of death for Indigenous women and girls between the ages of 15-24.² The MMIR Task Force of Colorado has found more than 50 MMIR cases in the state.

Cases of missing and murdered Indigenous relatives are met with **unique challenges** including:

- Jurisdictional complications and a lack of clear protocols for interagency cooperation.
- Poor and inconsistent reporting mechanisms resulting in a lack of missing persons coverage by mainstream media and omissions from the DOJ missing persons database.
- Frequent misclassification of racial identity of victims in police and missing persons records.
- There is currently no response specific to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives.

Solution: **SB22-150** addresses the crisis of violence against Indigenous people in Colorado by establishing an Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives and requiring protocols that will:

- **Improve responses to MMIR cases:** Establish an MMIR alert system, train first responders, and improve reporting mechanisms;
- **Ensure interagency coordination:** Develop policies and best practices, improve data tracking and accuracy, and increase coordination to lead to more effective actions and better outcomes;
- **Serve families of MMIR:** Review cold cases, provide sentencing recommendations, and educate law enforcement on culturally-sensitive best practices; and,
- **Support Indigenous communities:** Improve relations with law enforcement agencies, develop prevention measures, and increase public awareness and prevention training.

This bill creates a **coordinated response** between agencies that is much needed to ensure more effective actions and better outcomes of MMIR in Colorado. Currently, **15 other states** have taken legislative action to address the crisis of MMIR, including our neighbors in Utah, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Wyoming, and Kansas.

Colorado must act now to end the crisis of MMIR by supporting SB22-150 and the creation of the Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives!

¹ National Institute of Justice, *Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men*. May 2016.

² National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, *State of the Data on Violence Against American Indians and Alaska Native Women and Girls*. October 2021.



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SUPPORTED BY:

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives of Colorado Task Force

Northern Arapaho Tribe

Southern Ute Indian Tribe

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

350 Colorado

9to5 Colorado

American Indian College Fund

Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region

Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women (CSVANW)

Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Colorado Victims for Justice

Conservation Colorado

Deaf Overcoming Violence through Empowerment (DOVE)

Denver American Indian Commission

Denver Indian Center

Denver Indian Education Program

Denver Indian Family Resource Center

Elephant Circle

The Episcopal Parish of St. Barnabas of the Valley

Fort Lewis College

Harm Reduction Action Center

Haseya Advocate Program

Healthy Air and Water Colorado

ILA gallery

Jewish Community Relations Council

Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking

Native Love

Next 100 Colorado

Northern Arapaho Business Council

Not Our Native Daughters

Project Hope of Gunnison

Project Safeguard

Red Wind Consulting

Restoring Ancestral Winds

Rise Above Violence

Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center

Safe Shelter of St. Vrain

Santibeads

Sexual Assault Services Organization (SASO)

Sister Nations Color Guard

Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition

The Women's Foundation of Colorado

Tribe Development Company

University of Denver GSSW

Utah Domestic Violence Coalition

Ute Mountain Ute Honor Guard

Violence Free Colorado

Voces Unidas for Justice

VOTE SOLAR

Women's Lobby of Colorado

Womxn from the Mountain

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