

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 10

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES ZULKOSKY, Foster, Edgmon, Lincoln, Tarr, Spohnholz, Hopkins, Kreiss-Tomkins, Fields, Vance, Drummond, Josephson, Tuck, Johnston, Hannan, Claman, Wilson, Story

Introduced: 5/1/19

Referred: House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of**
2 **1994 without an exemption for tribal governments in the state and to support Savanna's**
3 **Act and highlight the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

5 **WHEREAS**, compared to the national average, Indigenous women face the highest
6 rates of violence per capita of any group; and

7 **WHEREAS** the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that,
8 in 2016, homicide was the third leading cause of death among Indigenous girls and women
9 between the ages of 10 and 24; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 2016, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey,
11 funded by the National Institute of Justice, reported that more than four in five, or 84.3
12 percent, of Indigenous women experience violence in their lives; and

13 **WHEREAS** the 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Survey reported that 56.1
14 percent of Alaska Native and American Indian women experience sexual violence, 55.5
15 percent experience physical violence by intimate partners, and 48 percent have been stalked in

1 their lifetime; and

2 **WHEREAS** the 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Survey reported that
3 Alaska Native and American Indian women are almost twice as likely to experience violence
4 and face murder rates more than 10 times the national average; and

5 **WHEREAS** a November 2018 report by the Urban Indian Health Institute, titled
6 "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls," found that there is a significant lack
7 of meaningful government data documenting the rates of missing and murdered Indigenous
8 women and girls in the United States; and

9 **WHEREAS**, according to the 2018 Urban Indian Health Institute report, the National
10 Crime Information Center reported that there were 5,712 reports of missing Alaska Native
11 and American Indian women in 2016, but only 116 of those reports were entered in the United
12 States Department of Justice's federal missing persons database that year; and

13 **WHEREAS** no database in the United States exists to track the number of Indigenous
14 women who have been abducted or murdered, creating gaps in reporting across the nation;
15 and

16 **WHEREAS**, according to the Urban Indian Health Institute report, Alaska has the
17 fourth-highest number of missing and murdered Indigenous women in the nation, despite the
18 state's small population; and

19 **WHEREAS** the report found that Anchorage ranks third highest in the nation for the
20 number of cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous women that are not included in
21 law enforcement records; and

22 **WHEREAS** efforts are underway throughout the state to raise public awareness of the
23 lack of information and resources available to support the families of missing or murdered
24 Indigenous women; and

25 **WHEREAS** multiple federal studies, including a 2013 report from the Indian Law and
26 Order Commission, have concluded that significant reform to tribal, state, and federal laws is
27 required to better protect families living in rural areas in the state by creating sufficient local
28 capacity for law enforcement and justice systems; and

29 **WHEREAS**, although the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act
30 included expanded jurisdictions and additional resources to address violence against
31 Indigenous women, tribal governments in the state cannot take advantage of these changes

1 because of existing jurisdictional complexities; and

2 **WHEREAS** the House of Representatives recognizes the current national and
3 statewide crisis regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women, which has debilitating
4 effects on both urban and rural communities, as the crisis normalizes violence against
5 Indigenous women in this country, and recognizes many of these women are invisible in data
6 and media;

7 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives expresses its gratitude and
8 appreciation to the devoted members of the Indigenous community for their perseverance in
9 bringing attention to this crisis; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges members of the
11 United States Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act without exemption
12 for Alaska and Alaska tribal governments; and be it

13 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges members of the
14 United States Congress to pass Savanna's Act to address the need for tribal access to national
15 missing persons databases; and be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives joins tribal and local
17 governments and all other interested stakeholders in raising awareness of the information
18 deficit and limited resources available for families of missing and murdered Indigenous
19 women.

20 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority
21 Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Minority Leader of the U.S.
22 Senate; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
23 Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
24 Honorable William Barr, Attorney General of the United States; and the Honorable Lisa
25 Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
26 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.