

DEB HAALAND

1<sup>st</sup> DISTRICT, NEW MEXICO

WASHINGTON OFFICE

1237 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
PHONE: (202) 225-6316

NEW MEXICO OFFICE

400 GOLD AVENUE SW  
SUITE 680

ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87102  
PHONE: (505) 346-6781

[HTTP://HAALAND.HOUSE.GOV/](http://haaland.house.gov/)



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
VICE-CHAIR  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS, CHAIR  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEES:  
MILITARY PERSONNEL  
READINESS

NATIVE AMERICAN CAUCUS, CO-CHAIR

REGIONAL WHIP

I write today in support of the Blackfeet Nation hosting the first-ever Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women two-day tribunal in Montana. Although it is unfortunate that we have this epidemic, we must bring light to this issue, and give voices to those gone, but not forgotten. I commend you all for taking the initiative to address this issue, and to provide the necessary support to victims of violence who may be cautious in reporting their cases. This issue is of particular importance to me. It is a travesty that four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their life time, and when 56.1 percent of Indian American and Alaskan Native women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. We need a collective effort to address these issues that affect so many of our Native people. These goals are feasible to achieve because Native people continue to demonstrate our strength and resilience despite the struggles that we face. Your event brings these issues to light and I commend you.

When I was elected to Congress, I made a pledge to Indian country to do what is right and necessary to address this significant issue across the country. I promised that I would continue working to educate my colleagues in Congress and the public to foster understanding and introduce legislation to move this issue forward to find solutions. I am in full support of future protections for Native women so that women, the heart and soul of the Native people, continue to prosper in their communities. We can no longer afford to suffer the persistent plague of violence ripping families and Native communities apart.

For far too long the Federal government has done little to address this epidemic that impacts the heart and soul of Indian country. It is my honor to have recently introduced H.R. 4289 - Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety for Native Communities Act, which requires federal agencies to report on cases of missing and murdered Indians. I was also privileged to introduce the Justice for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence Act, legislation that will amend the Civil Rights Act of 1968 to extend jurisdiction of tribal courts to cover cases involving sexual violence. I also successfully amended the House version of the Violence Against Women Act to address needs of our communities.

I am honored to provide full support of the Global Indigenous Counsel on the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women crisis. It is my privilege to support your national billboard campaign. With your help we continue to raise awareness so we can end the silence of this crisis!

I personally thank Mr. Rain Bear Stands Last, Executive Director of Global Indigenous Council, and Blackfeet National Counsel Chairman Timothy Davis for organizing this Tribunal. Your work will make a real difference in solving the epidemic of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. I stand with you all!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debra Haaland".

Debra Haaland  
Member of Congress