



Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

711 Central Avenue, Suite 220, Billings, Montana 59102

Ph: (406) 252-2550

Fax: (406) 254-6355



June 17, 2019.

The Honorable Jon Tester,
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tester,

RE: MMIW Legislation based upon our proposed amendments to *Savanna's Act*.

Thank you for your continued dedication to finding meaningful legislative avenues to combat the MMIW tragedy, and to working with tribal nations to achieve that end.

We understand that the amendments we proposed to *Savanna's Act* that you and many of your colleagues in the House and Senate support on a bipartisan basis, have met some resistance from the legislative departments of the bill's co-sponsors. In view of that, we fully support and encourage you to introduce stand-alone MMIW legislation based around those amendments. The Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association and Global Indigenous Council are among the tribal organizations that recommended the implementation of those amendments.

Much of the draft and proposed MMIW legislation introduced to date focuses on the formulation of advisory committees and task forces that, while vitally important, will take considerable time to make recommendations and longer still to implement. As presently constituted, *Savanna's Act* will not be the game-changer Indian Country desperately needs, which it could have been with the inclusion of the tribal alliance's proposed amendments. However, legislation crafted around those amendments can be that game changer, as those initiatives and protocols are crucial to making inroads into this epidemic. A bill entitled the *Reduce, Return and Recover Act*, with those amendments at the core, supplemented by provisions to address extractive industry "man camps" that are magnets for human traffickers of indigenous women and children; and the near no-man's-land of container ships in the Great Lakes region, another destination of misery and degradation for Native American women and children stolen from our communities and trafficked on the I-90 corridor from Billings to Minneapolis; could make immediate, positive impacts on the tragedy upon passage.

Our Senior Advisors on the MMIW issue, Mr. Tom Rodgers and Mr. Rain Bear Stands Last, have reported that momentum presently exists on Capitol Hill to challenge this so-far legislatively unchecked assault on the very fabric of our communities. This stand-alone legislation could be the realization of that.

With sincere thanks.

William F. Snell, Jr., Executive Director
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council.

Gerald Gray, Chairman
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council.