

# BRIDGING AGENCY DATA GAPS AND ENSURING SAFETY (BADGES) FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES ACT

## H.R. 1010 AND S. 390

Violence against Native women in the United States is a human rights crisis: 56.1% of all American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced sexual violence during their lifetime- they are more than 2.2 times more likely to be raped than non-Hispanic white women. On some reservations, the estimated rate of murder of Native women is more than 10 times the national average.

Compounding the steady erosion of tribal authority by the US government, there are multiple factors that contribute to this crisis of violence, including:

- A lack of interagency cooperation between federal, state, and tribal authorities when responding to and investigating cases of violence against Native women
- A lack of availability of rape kits (evidence collection) for survivors, which often means perpetrators are never tried
- A lack of adequate funding for tribes to address violence against Native women

The **Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act** would:

- Appoint a Tribal facilitator for the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System who will provide assistance and training to Tribes on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG)

- Evaluate federal law enforcement evidence collection, handling, and processing crucial to securing conviction of violent offenders
- Establish a grant program to support states, tribes, and tribal organizations in the coordination efforts related to missing and murdered persons cases and sexual assault cases
- Allows Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to conduct their own background check for law enforcement officer applicants to improve officer recruitment

Passing the BADGES for Native Communities Act would:

- Improve police officer recruitment and retention
- Increase transparency on the barriers that prevent evidence collection
- Help tribes and state and federal authorities better coordinate to prevent and respond to MMIWG and sexual violence cases

## AIUSA RECOMMENDS TO CONGRESS

1. Congress should pass the Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act, H.R. 1010/S.390.