



Legislation introduced to create Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives Task Force

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 27, 2022

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Last week, Hon. Madam Chair Amber Kanazbah Crotty of the 24th Navajo Nation Council introduced Legislation No. 203-22 to establish the Naabik'iyáti' Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives (MMDR) Task Force. The three branch multidisciplinary task force includes family representation and their objective is to develop a holistic approach to address the crisis of missing and murdered Navajo men, women, and children on and off the Nation.

“As leaders, we need to hear directly from the families and include them in the decision making process,” said Madam Chair Crotty. “The families are the experts on which areas need additional resources such as equipment, training, and funding for searches. They need immediate investment in wrap-around services for long-term counseling and support.”

The establishment of the task force mimics the efforts led by the State of New Mexico which created a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force to address the high rates of women who go missing or are murdered.

Once implemented, the findings and recommendations from the MMDR Task Force will be made to the Naabik'iyáti Committee and the Office of the President and Vice President in order to improve the processes for reporting and investigating cases. With this increased effort, Navajo families will be able to utilize new resources and access support services that were not previously available.

“I recognize the need for a task force on the Navajo Nation because our people have suffered for far too long,” said Speaker Seth Damon. “With our three-branches working collectively, we will find a solution to combat the murders and missing cases on and off the Navajo Nation.”

In order to assist Navajo families, the task force will advocate for, develop, and implement programs such as a missing persons toolkit, a non-profit data institute, and victim's services and victim advocates.

In addition, the Task Force will advocate for additional funding at the federal, state, and tribal level for transitional housing for victims and an inter-coordinated tribal information management system to track data.

“The Navajo Nation government needs to be accountable when a relative goes missing. Far too many families are navigating a broken criminal justice system and we demand immediate action,” added Hon. Crotty. “We can no longer tolerate the bare minimum for our people because they deserve better. This task force will streamline the process for our Navajo families who want answers and justice regarding their missing relatives.”

The MMDR Task Force will consist of 12 members with representatives from the Naabik'iyáti Committee, the Health, Education, & Human Services Committee, the Law & Order Committee, the Office of the Speaker, the Office of the President & Vice President, the Judicial Branch, as well as the Chief of the Navajo Police, the Chief Prosecutor, the Chief Public Defender and 3 representatives from Navajo communities familiar with the issues surrounding missing and murdered Navajo relatives.