



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

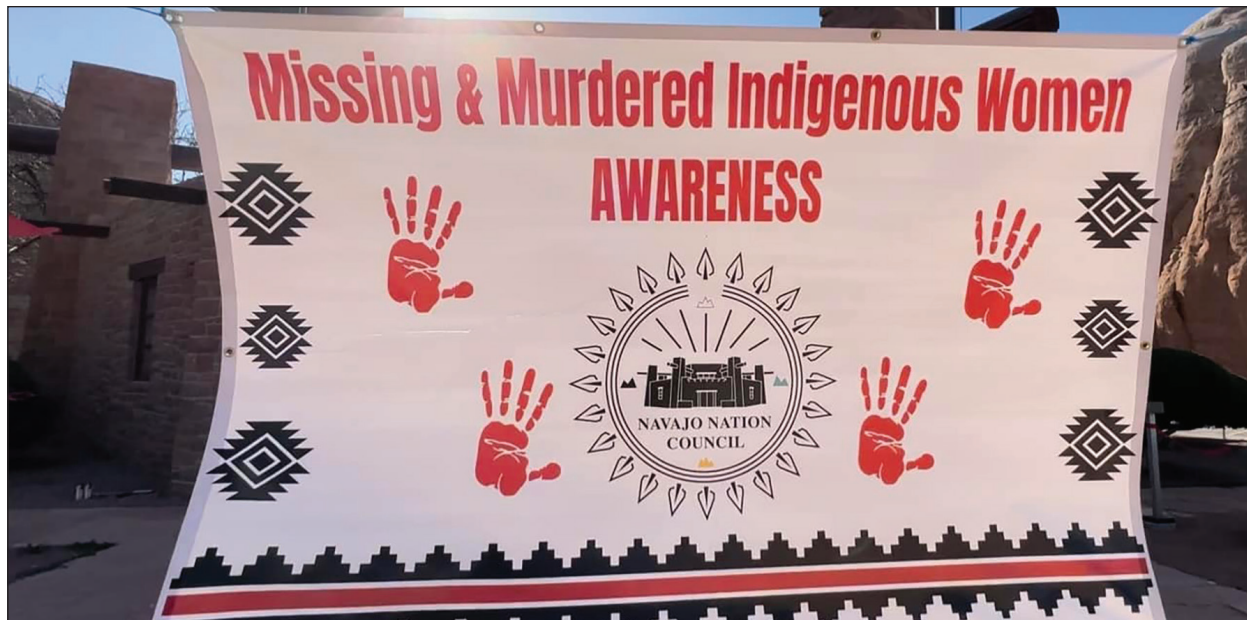
MEDIA CONTACT:

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 14, 2023

MMDR Task Force hears report on New Mexico MMIP State Response Plan



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – During a regular meeting of the 25th Navajo Nation Council Naa’bik’iyati’ Committee Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives (MMDR) Task Force on Nov. 30, the committee heard an update on the New Mexico Indian Affairs Committee’s dismantling of the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives (MMIWR) Task Force.

Office of the Speaker, Legislative Staff Assistant Sonlatsa Jim presented an overview of the New Mexico Indian Affairs Committee report on New Mexico’s recently dismantled MMIWR Task Force.

Jim attended a meeting with New Mexico Indian Affairs Department (IAD) Cabinet Secretary Designee, James R. Mountain and Deputy Cabinet Secretary and General Counsel, Josett Monette that was held on Nov. 28. During the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Designee Mountain said the IAD Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force (MMIWR) had accomplished its initiatives, stating the New Mexico State Response Plan is the result of MMIWR efforts.

Within the NM State Response Plan are six objectives that IAD intends to focus on, implementing strategies that MMIWR identified.

The objectives encompass support services for survivors and families, developing community

outreach, education, and prevention strategies, developing community resources for strong responses to MMIWR, leveraging resources for tribal judicial systems, increasing law enforcement capacity to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and report MMIWR Cases, and to develop capacity for data to be reported, documented, and used to support prevention and response.

The next phase of action is developing an advisory council in which the chair and co-chair will assist in selecting advisory members. IAD also intends to hire four full-time positions, which Mountain has submitted funding requests for.

Mountain advised that the first quarterly will be held in January 2024.

IAD co-hosted the first annual Missing Persons Day in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Public Safety (NMDPS) on Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Embassy Suites in Albuquerque.

Chair Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Beclabito, Cove, Gad Í'áhí/To'Koi Red Valley, Tooh Haltsoóí, Toadlena/ Two Grey Hills, Tsé Ałnáozt'íí) said that she requested an update on Operation Rainbow Bridge from IAD Special Projects Coordinator & Constituent Services Liaison, Melody Delmar, but has not received an update.

Navajo Nation Director of Criminal Investigation, (NNCI) Michael Henderson advised the Task Force that he requested a listing of Navajo deaths that occurred off the Navajo Nation that were identified by Operation Rainbow Bridge, to cross reference missing persons cases within NNCI to determine if any of the individuals were processed through the AHCCCS system.

Crotty advocated for the need for a website to house MMDR facts, resources, and information. Navajo Nation Police Department PSAP Supervisor confirmed they are collaborating with the Department of Information Technology and their Public Information Officer to establish a website to house resources, statistics, prevention awareness, Victim's Rights Act of 2023, and training for officers, schools, and chapter houses.

The next Naa'bik'iyati Committee MMDR meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2023. Please visit the Navajo Nation Council Website for meeting times and agenda.

###