



Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

88455 Pike Road

Bayfield, WI 54814

Phone: 715-779-3700 Fax: 715-779-3704

Email: redcliff@redcliff-nsn.gov

Red Cliff Tribal Council

December 22, 2021

The Hon. Brian Schatz, Chair
Senate Indian Affairs Committee
United States Senate
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Hon. Lisa Murkowski, Vice Chair
Senate Indian Affairs Committee
United States Senate
838 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Via Electronic Mail – Hard Copy Will Not Follow

RE: VAWA Reauthorization with Key Tribal Provisions

Dear Chair Schatz and Vice-Chair Murkowski:

I write on behalf of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians to support the bipartisan Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Title IX – SAFETY FOR INDIAN WOMEN discussion draft which includes important provisions that will improve safety and justice in tribal communities. As the Committee has well-documented, Tribal communities continue to suffer from the highest crime victimization rates in the country, and the reforms included in the bipartisan Title IX discussion draft are desperately needed today.

A 2016 report by the National Institute of Justice found that over 80% of American Indians and Alaska Natives will be a victim of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking in their lifetime. The study also found that 90% of these victims were victimized by a non-Indian perpetrator. Sadly, Indian children are particularly impacted by this violence and are 50% more likely to experience child abuse and sexual abuse than white children. The complicated jurisdictional framework at play in Indian country and Alaska continues to undermine safety for American Indian and Alaska Native victims of violence. Thus, clarifying that a Tribe's expanded jurisdiction includes these crimes is vital.

We are also so appreciative that your draft legislation recognizes that Indian children are equally in need of the protections that were extended to adult domestic violence victims in VAWA 2013. The Tribal Nations implementing VAWA 2013 report that children have been involved as

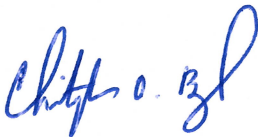
victims or witnesses in their cases nearly 60% of the time. We ask that the Title IX discussion draft include the provision from the House bill, H.R. 1620, to include crimes against elders. *Chair Schatz & Vice-Chair Murkowski, p. 2*

Indian elders are an integral part of our tribal communities to whom we owe respect and care. We are also hopeful that the measure will include the House bill's provision that recognizes Tribes' inherent jurisdiction over all crimes against law enforcement, detention, and court personnel not only those that deemed "covered crimes".

We also support the new grant program to reimburse Tribal Nations for expenses incurred in exercising special tribal criminal jurisdiction and the extension of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) program first authorized in the Tribal Law Order Act. Finally, we support the expanded tribal access to the National Crime Information Database. This is important to addressing the plague that is missing and murdered indigenous women in America.

Please let me know if there is anything you need from us in connection with this important issue. Again, we appreciate your leadership in drafting this important measure and look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Sincerely,



Christopher D. Boyd
Tribal Chairman

CC: Tammy Baldwin
Tammy_Baldwin@Baldwin.senate.gov

Ron Johnson
Ron_Johnson@Johnson.senate.gov