



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

AUG 30 2024

Dear Tribal Leader:

In November 2023, the Not Invisible Act Commission -- a cross-jurisdictional Federal advisory committee composed of law enforcement, Tribal leaders, Federal partners, service providers, family members of missing and murdered individuals, and survivors -- transmitted its congressionally mandated recommendations to the Department of the Interior, Department of Justice and U.S. Congress on how the U.S. can best resolve the crises of missing and murdered Indigenous peoples (MMIP) and human trafficking (HT). More about the Commission can be found at: <https://www.doi.gov/priorities/strengthening-indian-country/not-invisible-act-commission>.

The Commission heard testimony from individuals affected by the MMIP and HT crises in hearings held across the country, including seven states in areas most impacted by the crises and a two-day virtual hearing. During the hearings, several witnesses expressed frustration about the lack of national/local media coverage of MMIP cases.

As part of the Federal response to the Commission's recommendations on how to combat the MMIP and HT crises, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice committed to holding a roundtable to discuss best practices regarding the issue of fair and equitable media coverages of these issues, which have been underfunded and under-reported for decades.

This roundtable will provide a venue for dialogue between Tribal leaders, advocates, journalists, and Federal agencies to discuss this issue. The conversation will inform the development of a set of guidelines and best practices called for in Chapter 1, recommendation E1, of the Commission's report. The report and Federal responses can be found here: <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-and-justice-departments-outline-commitment-next-steps-effort-address-missing> or here: <https://www.justice.gov/tribal/media/1341181/dl?inline>.

Registration and information:

Roundtable: Increasing Media Coverage of the MMIP and HT Crises will take place on Zoom on **Thursday, September 26, 2024, at 3:00 pm EDT** and will be facilitated by officials from both the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice.

Those wishing to join may register at https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsd-moqjwvG_tX80Ae8DvUjcAXUkO07yM.

If you have any questions, please contact Indian Affairs Office of Public Affairs Director Josh Barnett at (202) 208-2825 or newsmedia@bia.gov.

Written Testimony and Questions:

If you are unable to join, please submit written testimony or recommendations to help inform the Departments' compilation of best practices for reporting on the MMIP and HT crises to newsmedia@bia.gov no later than Friday, October 4.

Thank you in advance for supporting the shared work to address the MMIP and HT crises. Only with the collective participation of all our communities will our missing, murdered, or trafficked relatives and friends no longer be invisible.

Sincerely,

Wizipan Garriott
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Exercising by delegation the authority of the
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs