



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **No More Invisible Victims**

*Alaska Native Organizations are urging Governor Dunleavy to take action to protect Alaska Native Women and Girls*

Anchorage, Alaska - Today a group of Alaska Native organizations sent a letter to Governor Dunleavy expressing their support for funding in the state operating budget to investigate the cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

“For far too long our missing and murdered Alaska Native women and girls have been ignored and it is time that we stand together to demand action that will bring justice to our women, girls and their families,” stated Kendra Kloster, Executive Director of Native Peoples Action. “We need our elected leaders to recognize that we have a real problem in our state and our nation that cannot continue to go ignored. It is imperative that we begin to take steps to protect Alaska Native women and girls so these tragedies do not continue.”

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that murder is the third-leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women and that rates of violence on reservations and rural areas can be up to ten times higher than the national average.

In a recent study by the Urban Indian Health Institute (1), Anchorage was listed as having the third highest number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and Alaska was ranked fourth in the nation for the highest number of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. This is beyond disturbing and heart-breaking on so many levels.

“When Alaskans face crisis, we come immediately to each other’s aid. Protection of human life and well-being has always been an Alaskan value. No family should be left questioning what happened to their loved one,” stated Princess Johnson, Native Movement board member, “Bringing these stories to light and seeking justice for the lives of murdered and missing Alaska Native women is a critical action that sends a strong message that we will no longer tolerate violence against our women and children.”

We need funding in the state operating budget for the Department of Public Safety to begin thorough investigations and funding for the Department of Law to prosecute the cases that are brought forward. Taking this an important first step that will begin bringing justice to these women and families. Native Peoples Action is working with organizations and individuals across the state to identify other necessary actions, including legislation, to expand efforts to protect Alaska Native women and girls and to ensure that everyday citizens, not just law enforcement, feel the responsibility to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and respect of Alaska Native women and girls. The statistics are far too daunting and the call to action time is now.

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(1) <http://www.uihi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Missing-and-Murdered-Indigenous-Women-and-Girls-Report.pdf>

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**Native Peoples Action, Inc.**

is an Alaska Native non-profit organization. We strive to provide Alaska Native peoples, communities, and our traditional values with a voice at all levels of policy making.