



**Josh Kaul**  
Wisconsin Attorney General

**P.O. Box 7857**  
**Madison, WI 53707-7857**

---

## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 2, 2020

### **AG Kaul Announces Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announces the launch of a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force to help fight the abduction, homicide, violence and trafficking of Indigenous women in Wisconsin.

“Effectively addressing the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Wisconsin will require law enforcement, tribal leaders, victim advocates, and others to work collaboratively to collect data and identify solutions,” said Attorney General Kaul. “The creation of this task force is an important step in the effort to combat this complex and serious problem.”

In partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Indigenous communities, the task force plans to examine the factors that contribute to missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW), focusing on understanding the roles federal, state and tribal jurisdictions play, and how to improve and implement robust data collection and reporting methods.

“While there is so much that needs to be done to stop the violence perpetrated on Native women and girls, I applaud the Wisconsin Department of Justice for taking an important first step in establishing this task force,” notes Shannon Holsey, president of both the Stockbridge-Munsee Community and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council.

“Addressing the MMIW crisis requires acknowledging that the crisis exists, understanding the deep and intricate roots underlying the crisis, providing justice to the missing and murdered and to protecting Native women and girls. As a tribal

leader, I look forward to our continued bipartisan engagement to identify meaningful actions that Attorney General Kaul, tribes and task force can take to turn the tide on this tragic situation.”

Violence against Native women and girls is an under-reported problem throughout the U.S., and cases are often misclassified or there is confusion about jurisdiction. Accurate data protocols are needed to improve data collection and tracking information.

“The problem of violence against women and children and the disproportionate impact on Native women and communities is the responsibility of all of society to address. For meaningful long-term reform, we must look to solutions that are Indigenous-led while addressing both historical acts of violence against Indigenous women as well as those that still exist today within modern institutions,” said Kristin Welch, Menikanaehkem Women’s Leadership Cohort-MMIW Coordinator.

“We are incredibly proud of the partnerships between Women’s Leadership Cohort MMIW, Wisconsin DOJ, tribal nations, grassroots leaders, and survivors of violence not only because of the bravery displayed in order to discuss such deeply painful issues of MMIW; but for their continued diligence to dismantle oppressive systems that are the root cause of such violence.”

This year, 2019 Wisconsin Assembly Bill 548/Senate Bill 493 (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/related/proposals/ab548.pdf>) did not pass the legislature before the end of regular floor period. Authored by Representatives Amanda Stuck and Jeffrey Mursau, and Senators Janet Bewley and Jeff Smith, the bill would have supported the creation of an MMIW task force to probe the core causes of missing and murdered indigenous women. Now that the legislative session has ended, AG Kaul agreed with tribal leaders that this issue is too important to wait until the next legislative session to take action.

Additional information, including the composition of the task force will be forthcoming.