

Senate Bill 22-150.

I am a relative of a Native American (Southern Ute) woman who was murdered in Longmont Colorado, on April 22, 1999. Her name was Bernadine (Bernie) Frost e-gap. Her murder is a non-native American man. Bernie's case went into the cold case files. The efforts that were taken, were by my grandfather Raymond Frost and our relatives. He went to Longmont/boulder area to hang fliers and ask for help in finding out who murdered his daughter. His fliers often got removed from the places he hung them, and any efforts he made would be gone. We as a family had very little resources to get her information out the public. In a report made, it is stated that the police did not regard my aunt's death as suspicious or as a murder. Many cases are often lost in the system, many women, men, and children are often murdered and left, or taken somewhere else to be found, or not found and justice is not served.

When we ask for an MMIR alert system, we are hoping to have a platform, the same way America outside of Indian Country, has one. Had there been an alert system earlier, or coverage for my aunt's murder, we, as her family, could have had better support, and/or a better voice for our loved one. Every time, we look at the news, we see many people missing or murdered, but very seldom, do we see coverage on our relatives who are indigenous.

I understand there is jurisdictional issues within the United States Judicial System. I also understand that as we request this assistance to help protect our people, that we are not looking to lose any sovereignty that we use to govern our people. We need answers, direction, collaborations, trainings, and cultural understanding.

Our country has gone through a lot of hardships from the beginning of colonial contact. We are now finding bodies of 10,000 plus indigenous children from boarding schools from Canada and into the United States. Children who were buried in mass burial graves, or graves where no one would care. These children suffered abuse and were left for dead to be forgotten about.

When people think of Indian people, they think we still live-in tipis. I've heard people say we are drunks. There was a saying that said, "Kill the Indian, Save the child." Therefore, stripping us of our culture, language, and our truths.

We still have living elders who remember the abuse they went through, and never got the justice they deserved. We still walk with our elders who were stripped of their voice. This isn't just "historical trauma", this is present day trauma in Indian Country.

Indigenous people should never go into a cold case file and should never be buried in mass burial graves.

MMIR, should have a voice, justice, and a platform to assist families, so their loved one's receive Justice.

MMIR is not just a discussion. We as indigenous people are standing up and asking for help to protect our people. Violence often leading to murder often happen, because our elders and ancestors were beaten to be quiet or die, and therefore, many indigenous people will never use their voice to trust many when their life is in danger. There is a lot of fear flowing through our blood because of our history. We need to end this and give Indian country a voice and protection.

Thank you,

Daisy Bluestar



Together we can end relationship abuse

House State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB22-150, a bill that takes a needed step toward recognizing and addressing the violence committed against Indigenous communities in Colorado.

The centuries of historical trauma experienced by Indigenous communities in the United States are tied to high rates of violence, including domestic violence, committed against Indigenous people. The [research](#) we have about the problem demands a community-specific response:

- More than 84% of American Indian and Alaska Native women and 81.6% of AI/AN men have experienced violence in their lifetime
- 55.5% of AI/AN women have experienced physical violence from an intimate partner, and 66% have experienced psychological abuse
- 73% of Indigenous respondents to the [2015 U.S. Transgender Survey](#) had experienced domestic violence

Domestic violence is already spoken of by advocates as its own pandemic, and Indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely to be assaulted than other women. Homicide is the third leading cause of death for Indigenous women. [Almost half of these women](#) are murdered by an intimate partner, and many are harmed by partners who are not Indigenous. The LGBTQ and Two-Spirit community face even higher rates of domestic and sexual violence.

Relying on existing resources to meet the specific needs of Indigenous communities in Colorado is insufficient. SB22-150 will improve data collection, training, responses to cases, and more. Colorado must address the normalization of violence against Indigenous communities. Thank you for taking the time to review our testimony, and please vote yes on SB22-150.

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