PROCLAMATION No. 01-21

PROCLAMATION
OF THE
COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES

Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

May 5, 2021

WHEREAS, the Colorado River Indian Tribes is a federally recognized Indian Tribe, duly organized with a tribal governing body known as the Tribal Council according to the provisions contained in the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934; and

WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Act, ("VAWA") which became a federal law on September 13, 1994, and reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013, sought to expand judicial resources to combat violence against women and provide protection to women who are victims of violent abuse; and

WHEREAS, studies show that American Indian and Alaskan Natives are almost three times more likely to experience violent crimes and at least twice more likely to experience rape or sexual assault crimes than other races, therefore Title IX. Safety for Indian Women was included in the VAWA to manage the disproportionate violence against indigenous women; and

WHEREAS, according to a study conducted on behalf of the United States Department of Justice, in some tribal communities, indigenous women face murder rates that are roughly ten times the national average; and the National Institute of Justice, 84% of American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime, more than half of whom experienced sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the National Crime Information Center reported nearly 6,000 cases of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls, but the U.S. Department of Justice was tracking only about 100 cases; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of surviving families, the United States Senate by resolution designated May 5 2017, as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls ("MMIWG") calling for people to commemorate the lives of the missing and murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native women whose cases are documented and undocumented in public records and media, and to demonstrate solidarity with families of victims in light of those tragedies; and

WHEREAS, current reports of abduction and murder of Native women and girls are alarming and represent one of the most horrific aspects of the spectrum of violence committed against Native women; these disappearances or murders are often connected to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking and the intersection of gender-based violence and MMIWG is heavily intertwined; and

WHEREAS, the issues surrounding missing and murdered Native women must continue to be elevated beyond public awareness for action and increased accountability of the justice systems; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado River Indian Tribes community has lost four (4) women to violence in the past five years which has greatly impacted our small community; and

WHEREAS, there are limited resources on the Colorado River Indian Tribes reservation and across tribal Nations, Alaska Native Villages, and Native Hawaiian communities to help our relatives who are victims and survivors of violence and holding offenders accountable; and

WHEREAS, ending violence requires the support of tribal leaders, the collaborative efforts of the law enforcement, tribal justice system, public health officials, and community members, and requires that everyone commit to our indigenous lifeways of non-violence and respect.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes, to hereby designate the month of May, 2021 as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Awareness Month, in honor of the lives of women and girls who were victims and survivors of violence; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that the Colorado River Indian Tribes stands united in our commitment to end all forms of violence on the tribal or ancestral home of Colorado River Indian Tribes; and

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY PROCLAIMED, we call upon all Colorado River Indian Tribes citizens, law enforcement, tribal organizations, health officials and all tribal programs to speak out against all forms of violence and to actively support local efforts to honor the lives of our Native sisters by continuing to shed light on the countless stories and tragedies of our missing and murdered Native sisters, and to support the need for ongoing advocacy to change laws, policies, protocols, allocation of resources targeted to prevent and end violence and injustices and that strengthen the legal systems to hold offenders accountable, and return our Tribal Nation to ways of respect, honor, love and compassion and declare No More Stolen Sisters.

COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES' TRIBAL COUNCIL

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