



"Lady Justice" used with permission from DG Smalling, Choctaw Nation

# Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives

## Operation Lady Justice

### Listening Session Notes DOI Tribal Interior Budget Committee (TIBC) Meeting March 12, 2020, 9:30-11:30 p.m. Washington, DC and Webinar/Conference Call

Attendees	
<b>Task Force Co-Chairs:</b>	Katie Sullivan, Tara Sweeney
<b>Task Force Members:</b>	Jay Greenberg for Terry Wade, Laura Rogers, Charlie Addington, Jeannie Hovland
<b>White House:</b>	Tyler Fish
<b>Executive Director:</b>	Marcia Good

<b>Listening Session</b>	
<b><u>Speaker</u></b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have new policies already implemented in this area</li> <li>• We have had to prioritize due to other work, missing persons cases are reports often days to weeks old when we get them, and where should we start</li> <li>• Mostly female teens missing</li> <li>• We need education because it is a very big challenge in IC, and not a feel good thing</li> <li>• It all boils down to this: we need more money and more manpower in Indian Country, period. It's that simple</li> <li>• We are not on FBI's priority list, especially for missing... "call us if you need us, it's not something we do"</li> <li>• We need to work together with active efforts between tribal LE, FBI, BIA and USAOs</li> <li>• We have to prioritize these cases, because we have too many other things to do</li> <li>• But we cannot forget about DV and child abuse cases as well</li> <li>• The protocols are not going to mean anything without an increase in manpower and money</li> <li>• You may as well take that 1997 report about a crisis in IC and change the date to 2020-it's the same</li> <li>• Look at the caseload of BIA-these cases lead up to MMIP; Issue much bigger</li> <li>• Rape cases are still open in Nome. We have a public justice and safety subcommittee meeting with TIBC but DOJ person has only been to one meeting, and then no response back. How can we work together that way? We need to talk</li> <li>• There are problems like VOCA money barriers, and we want them in our subcommittee to talk and how to leverage the funding</li> </ul>
TF Katie Sullivan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Took over OJP in June, got VOCA \$\$ feedback and were able finally to get all the money out</li> <li>• We have done a formula consultation and we are going forward with a formula this year</li> <li>• Building capacity around victim services is very important</li> <li>• Teens have nothing to do, and have bad issues to cope with at home. So they wonder why they would want to live, stay</li> </ul>

<b>Listening Session</b>	
	<p>there? What activities can we give them? Outside, healthy activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to do more for our youth, and tribes must step up the plate and take ownership and be responsible</li> </ul>
TF Tara Sweeney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal government needs to be a better partner to tribes</li> <li>• We also need tribal LE to be a better partner with us</li> <li>• We need data</li> <li>• We need a foundation of trust</li> <li>• We need VOCA flexibility, streamlining of application, and changes to budget</li> <li>• The first year, everyone's budgets were cut in half</li> <li>• We have already document the problems, and proposed solutions, but there is never enough money in all categories—it doesn't meet the need</li> <li>• Look at all data and make solutions with real funding</li> <li>• There is no cooperation with the states in PL280 areas, which is a different problem</li> <li>• The administration doesn't want to hear this but the solution is funding</li> <li>• Thanks for the consultation OVC on the VOCA tribal set aside, but emphasize that tribes must go through complicated grant process and give 5 year grants with 5 different time lines and it becomes quickly impossible to manage the grants</li> <li>• Give like BIA LE \$, out to the tribes, and get away from complex grants</li> <li>• We need section 477 ability for DOJ funding, or 638 contract ability like in DOI</li> </ul>
TF Katie Sullivan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are in discussions about it, complicated</li> <li>• AG wants to be responsive</li> </ul>
TF Tara Sweeney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is value in having listening sessions outside of consultations, because it can guide internal decisions</li> <li>• When you study the MMIWG issue, how will the TF work with the state Task Forces already in place?</li> </ul>
TF Jeannie Hovland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HHS protects, recovery</li> <li>• We also need to think about urban settings, developing frameworks across HHS for ways to reach vulnerable populations</li> </ul>

## Listening Session

- We need to understand what all state laws are in place
- We have an internal think group in HHS on states, and those conversations have already started so we don't recreate the wheel but work together
- How can we help on mental health, substance abuse, etc.
- And kids want to be involved in the conversations
- We also need to break the stigma of bringing our relatives home when they have been recovered, have services in place
- I was the Chair of the Public Justice and Safety Working group for TIBC for the last 4 years
- Need to be blunt: how much more do we need to talk about this?? It's all about dollars and resources
- Most of the folks have no idea of living on a reservation; do the TF members truly understand the economic and geographic issues of living on the reservation? At Navajo, we are 27,000 square miles, the size of West Virginia, with less than 300 police officers, and 4 shifts that rotate
- We have been asking, demanding, but we come here and argue and talk and then you forget us
- This body of TIBC has been making recommendations but we aren't going anywhere with the issues, because of a lack of funding and restrictions on funding but we continue to ask and ask
- Why do we have to even "qualify" for funding ? It's nonsense and how it is distributed doesn't meet the need at local levels. Navajo will continue to advocate for additional funding every time
- Do you truly have time to executive the EO? Truly? When do you have time to do this work, because you all have other jobs
- You need to revisit the composition of the TF because we need you to be 90% of your time on the reservation, and not in DC
- This subgroup has been sending a message to the AG to meet, and getting nowhere. We've never had a major engagement with DOJ, OTJ keeps sending staff level, or has conflicts. Imagine how many lives we'd save if we stopped talking and started doing

<b>Listening Session</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We don't need to apologize for being blunt, we need sincere engagement with local LE</li> <li>• We are not asking for a handout, this is your trust responsibility, and you need to help us send a message to the administration that we need money</li> <li>• We asked for a public safety summit and got it but we need a document about what was said and follow up on action items</li> <li>• We need DOJ and VOCA folks at the TIBC subcommittee to talk</li> <li>• It is good that there is a TF</li> <li>• Communication problems in remote areas including not being able to call for 911 help, time frames for evidence expire etc.</li> <li>• We are looking into how to get SLEC qualifications for our officers</li> <li>• Suggest that TF use reward money on cold cases to bring in resources to help</li> </ul>
TF Jay Greenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• later notes: we have that resource already available and can use reward money</li> <li>• We need to change the requirement that there is a 24 hour waiting period before reporting</li> </ul>
TF Charlie Addington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• later notes: there is no such waiting period so we need to do training on that</li> <li>• Thank you for the executive order but without funding, not much can get accomplished other than to bring awareness to what we already know</li> <li>• There is no infrastructure in place for data sharing, dead zones where we can't even text. You need to have proper infrastructure in place to collect the data</li> <li>• There is not one universal database to collect the data</li> <li>• How do you know if a person is Native American when they are found, we can't</li> <li>• On Navajo, we are reporting to NamUs, but still shortfalls</li> <li>• This issue has opened up a can of worms, but on the back shelf and never addressed</li> <li>• We are appreciative of the TF but there are so many more issues than just collecting data and identifying individuals</li> </ul>

<b>Listening Session</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a critical time frame for collecting evidence, we need it collected in a timely matter and without people on the ground, we lost that opportunity</li> <li>• We are trying to hire our own medical examiner because too much information is lost, i.e. rape kits, BAC etc.</li> <li>• The push is to get information into NamUs, but what are they doing with the DNA samples? Another tribe in AZ gave DNA samples and it was used for other issues. People in IC very hesitant of giving up DNA</li> <li>• Also have questions about community awareness; great response but zero done without proper funding. Public safety differs among tribes</li> <li>• “Now is the time to stop talking and start walking.”</li> <li>• Who is the owner of the DNA that is submitted to NamUs?</li> <li>• We have state legislation pending</li> <li>• We already have the data, what are people doing at a state level?</li> <li>• What is the timeline for action</li> <li>• Funding is needed</li> </ul>
TF Tara Sweeney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EO directs action plus reports</li> <li>• These sessions help inform our recommendations from us to the President</li> </ul>
TF Katie Sullivan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not just about a report, as there are deliverables in the EO plus the DOJ has a separate initiative as well</li> <li>• Failure and gaps are opportunities</li> <li>• The federal declination rates are a big issue in IC</li> <li>• Some USAs are great, some not</li> <li>• All USAs need to make IC a priority, not just tribal liaison</li> </ul>
Task Force Katie Sullivan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosecution is really VIP</li> <li>• Now OJP funds tribal SAUSAs, cross designated to prosecute in tribal and federal court</li> <li>• It’s not perfect, but it’s a start</li> <li>• This AG, at this moment in time, has a true response, and it is a special moment with the WH as well</li> </ul>
Task Force Jeannie Hovland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are making efforts in ICWA, SOAR training, and several operations regarding federal funding and preventions services</li> </ul>

<b>Listening Session</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We encourage states to collect information and then we can aggregate</li> <li>• We respect data sovereignty, we just need information to help to identify HT trends</li> </ul>
Task Force Jay Greenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We do have rewards in IC, and I approve them</li> <li>• We have two active elements now for response and how we can have an accelerated response for missing cases</li> <li>• We also have a response for training in IC and scheduling to go out to do training in different states. We've trained 250 officers already, which is "great but not enough, we can always be better"</li> <li>• We need immediate response teams</li> <li>• Training should be accessible to tribes</li> <li>• Not everyone has tribal police, so keep that in mind</li> <li>• All relatives in all villages are impacted in these cases</li> <li>• Why do we make tribes compete with each other</li> <li>• We have to re-educate folks</li> <li>• We need forensic labs for tribes, and expand on relationships to create labs for tribes</li> <li>• Don't ignore victims as victims</li> <li>• You haven't heard things like you will hear about when people come to listening sessions to talk about their people, the cases within their families. It's really hard to hear, very powerful</li> <li>• We have to have the respect of those charged with figuring it out</li> <li>• Your agency can generally put together for us a matrix of funding sources, limitations</li> <li>• Then the TF can help fill in the gaps</li> <li>• We agree with the Quiet Crisis, Broken Promises report, we are human, we are people</li> <li>• We want acknowledgement that you have heard us—ie, we heard you, and here is what we are doing about it in real time</li> <li>• We are different, discounted, disregarded and ignored. Please listen to the testimony about our personal experience</li> <li>• Reports are made but LE take no action until after 24 hours have passed</li> <li>• We repeatedly hear "she is out having a good time"</li> </ul>

<b>Listening Session</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first 48 hours are as critical as in murder cases</li> <li>• The 24 hour law needs to be changed</li> <li>• We need funding</li> <li>• We tell you the same story every time and still our funding gets cut</li> </ul>
TF Charlie Addington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no 24 hour law, and we need to do training</li> <li>• Need to reauthorize VAWA</li> <li>• PL-280, Alaska is underserved</li> <li>• You talk about IC but remember that IC doesn't cover Alaska except Metlakatla</li> <li>• It takes 2 days for troopers in Alaska to reach crime scenes, nothing happens</li> <li>• VPSOs go to the same academy as troopers, should be considered the same qualified</li> <li>• They care more about a moose kill than crime in villages</li> <li>• Need to look at the State of Alaska</li> <li>• We need to be able to participate in programs, and we need more funding for tribes here</li> <li>• We only have one tribal peace officer, we got that through CTAS dollars. The state has one trooper assigned, and its 130 mile drive through the circle up and back for his loop; the response is terrible</li> <li>• Federal government still has a trust responsibility, cannot defer to the state</li> </ul>

