

# ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION LADY JUSTICE

## BACKGROUND ON THE TASK FORCE

*Executive Order 13898* established the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, designated Operation Lady Justice. EO 13898 required the Task Force to submit a status report in November 2020 summarizing the activities and accomplishments of Operation Lady Justice during its first year. A final report is due in November 2021.

## TRIBAL CONSULTATIONS, LISTENING SESSIONS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FIELD

The Task Force conducted consultations and listening sessions with Tribal governments on the scope and nature of the issues regarding missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives.

In addition to these consultations and listening sessions, the Task Force hosted other engagements with Tribal law enforcement, FBI and Bureau of Indian Affairs victim services programs, Tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions and others to hear about field experiences.

## DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES

Operation Lady Justice and the Attorney General's MMIP Initiative have worked together to develop model guides that can be utilized to meet each Tribal community's needs, resources and culture. The guides are tailored to cover multiple topics, such as how to develop community, law enforcement and victim services guidelines for missing person cases, to name a few.

## COLD CASE WORKING GROUP AND TEAMS

The Task Force, through Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services, established seven multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional cold case teams to review cold cases involving American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Staffed by newly-appointed criminal investigators from the BIA, Office of Justice Services, each cold

case team may include other partners from Tribal law enforcement and the Department of Justice.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS OF THE TASK FORCE

### **Recommendation 1:**

Draft and propose legislation to authorize both Department of Justice databases in the area of missing person cases to share information with each other.

### **Recommendation 2:**

Provide funding for programs to support Tribes in developing and providing continued support to their Missing and Murdered Native Americans (MMNA) teams or task forces.

### **Recommendation 3:**

Consider adding additional task force members. There are other executive agencies and offices beyond those specifically named in the EO which have a role in addressing the challenges surrounding missing or murdered AI/AN.



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

For far too long, our communities and nations have grieved and mourned for our brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grandfathers, grandmothers, aunties, uncles, nieces and nephews. It's time for a clear federal commitment to fund tribal law enforcement, shelters, domestic violence and sexual assault organizations, and to enact policy change that will bring justice to victims, families of victims, survivors, and families of survivors.

– Tamra Borchardt-Slayton, Chairwoman for the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah  
Listening Session, May 29, 2020