

# #MMIWPDx Awareness Fact Sheet

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- Portland has the highest number of sexually oriented businesses per capita of any city in the nation.<sup>1</sup>
- One of the problems in understanding the level of trafficking involving Native Americans appears to be that neither law enforcement nor human services organizations keep track of the percentage of Native Americans among known or suspected trafficking survivors, even though they do keep track of other ethnicities.<sup>1</sup>
- A report indicates a significant amount of trafficking of Native, Hispanic and White women in Madras (outside of Warm Springs), where traffickers pick up young women to transport to Portland.<sup>1</sup>
- More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3%) have experienced violence in their lifetime, including:
  - 56.1% who have experienced sexual violence
  - 55.5% who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner
  - 48.4% who have experienced stalking
  - 66.4% who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner (NIJ, 2016)
- Recording of victim's race is often incorrect, if recorded at all, in Oregon State Police, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, and Portland Police Bureau databases.
- Murder is the third-leading cause of death among Native women.<sup>2</sup>
- Issues of unfair racial bias has been reported by service providers and law enforcement. Natives in urban areas like Portland often do not feel heard or feel safe to report being victimized.
- Native American women face the highest rates of rape of any racial group in Oregon.<sup>3</sup>
- The Gateway Center for Domestic Violence served 119 Native women in 2017, which represents a 200% higher rate than the total Native American population in the Portland metro area. This count does not include those women who reported they are two or more races.
- Last year, a congressional resolution to designate May 5th as a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls was unanimously passed in the United States Senate. It was sponsored by Senator Daines and Senator Tester. There is another resolution, also sponsored by Senator Daines, that is currently up for vote to designate it again for 2018.
- Many others are joining the City of Portland in raising awareness of the issue, including Metro regional government. Senator Ron Wyden has signed on as a cosponsor for [Senate Resolution 401](#) to designate May 5, 2018 as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.

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<sup>1</sup> [Human Trafficking & Native Peoples in Oregon: A Human Rights Report \(May 2014\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [CDC: Racial and Ethnic Differences in Homicides of Adult Women and the Role of Intimate Partner Violence \(2017\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Count Her In: A report about women and girls in Oregon \(2016\)](#)

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- The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center states that a study by the U.S. Department of Justice has found that in some tribal communities, American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average.<sup>4</sup>
- High rates of rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and murder of Native women are connected to the long history of tribes being unable to prosecute non-Natives who commit these crimes. Native women have been under threat and many of them have lost faith in the system to protect them, often resulting in not reporting to law enforcement.<sup>5</sup>
- I-5 corridor trafficking includes a high number of Native women who are here from other states.<sup>6</sup>
- In Portland, which is off-reservation, the state has jurisdiction to prosecute non-Natives, and the only reservations in Oregon where the state does not have jurisdiction are the Umatilla, Warm Springs and Burns-Paiute reservations. The Umatilla tribe now has jurisdiction under federal law to prosecute non-Natives for some of these crimes. (US Dept. of Justice)
- In 2017, the Oregon missing person's database indicates there were 26 Native women reported missing, ranging in ages from 14 to 29 years old. (mmiwdatabase.com)
- The Savannah's Act bill, introduced in both the Senate and House at the end of 2017, would require the Department of Justice (DOJ) to update the online data entry format for federal databases relevant to cases of missing and murdered Indians to include a new data field for users to input the victim's tribal enrollment information or affiliation. In addition, DOJ must:
  - make standardized law enforcement and justice protocols that serve as guidelines for law enforcement agencies with respect to missing and murdered Indians,
  - develop protocols to investigate those cases that are guided by the standardized protocols,
  - meet certain requirements to consult with Indian tribes, and
  - provide tribes and law enforcement agencies with training and technical assistance relating to the development and implementation of the law enforcement and justice protocols.

Federal law enforcement agencies that investigate and prosecute crimes related to missing and murdered Indians must modify their law enforcement and justice protocols to comply with the standardized protocols.

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<sup>4</sup> [Webinar: Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women \(2017\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [For an in-depth overview, "Safety for Native Women: VAWA and American Indian Tribes" is available at niwrc.org](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Sex Trafficking Rampant in Indian Country; Pimps on Prowl for Native Girls. Indian Country Today \(2012\)](#)