Written by End Domestic Abuse WI, Jenna Gormal
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http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/indigenous-women-missing-s5.jpg

Murder is the third leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaskan Native Women, and they are subjected to higher levels of violence, including trafficking, sexual assault, domestic abuse and homicide, than virtually any other group in the United States.

Lac Du Flambeau - Rep. Beth Meyers, Rep. Amanda Stuck, Sen. Janet Bewley, and advocates gathered on the land of the Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa on Wednesday to release a bill that would create a statewide inter-governmental task force to address the problem of missing and murdered indigenous women.

Indigenous people define the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women (often abbreviate “MMIW”) as an epidemic level of violence against native women. Native women are subjected to higher levels of violence, including trafficking, sexual assault, domestic abuse and homicide, than virtually any other group in the United States. Perpetrators of the violence are usually non-native. Advocates say that this continuing disproportionate level of cruelty directed at native women is rooted in colonialism, sexism and racism and is a continuation of patterns of violence that have been present since European arrival.

“This is an extremely important issue, as murder is the third leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaskan Native Women”, said Pennie Meyers, Executive Director of the

Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, “We fully support increasing the visibility of this devastating epidemic and urge the legislature to quickly pass this bill.”

“We are grateful to the native advocates and legislators who have brought this bill forward,” said Patti Seger, Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. “The violence that native women have been subjected to since colonization is beyond inhumane. It’s high time we recognize it, understand it and end it.”

The legislation introduced today would bring together tribal and state government leaders, survivors, advocates and law enforcement to examine the problem of missing and murdered indigenous women and require that group to submit a report with recommendations to the state legislature and tribal governments.

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The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA, www.wcasa.org) is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 60 sexual assault service provider agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to survivors of sexual assault and their families. WCASA works to ensure that every survivor in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need. WCASA also works to create the social change necessary to ensure a future where no child, woman or man is ever sexually violated again. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the leading voice for victims of domestic abuse in Wisconsin. At End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, we educate shelter and program volunteers and advocates, law enforcement, legislators, and community members to provide safety and support to survivors. We strive to shift Wisconsin from the attitudes and beliefs that cause domestic violence to values of mutual respect and equality, and we partner with communities in the effort to prevent and end domestic abuse. We encourage reporters to include the National Domestic Violence Hotline number [1−800−799−SAFE(7233)] in their stories for victims who need help. A list of local Wisconsin domestic violence victim service providers can be found at
http://www.endabusewi.org
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