

United States Senate

November 1, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Debra Haaland  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Attorney General Garland and Secretary Haaland:

I write to demand that immediate actions are taken regarding the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) crisis in light of the most recent GAO report issued on October 28, 2021. The GAO-22-104045 report shows that your departments, as well as the Biden Administration as a whole, have not promptly and sufficiently executed recent statutory requirements to address this crisis and meet the urgent needs of Tribes.

The recent GAO report found the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of the Interior (DOI) have failed to abide by the laws set forth in the “Not Invisible Act of 2019” and “Savanna’s Act.” As of June 2021, DOJ had not conducted the outreach required by “Savanna’s Act” in order to enter information regarding missing persons into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUS). The deadline for this outreach to occur was April 8, 2021. Additionally, under the “Not Invisible Act,” the Secretary of the Interior alongside the Attorney General was tasked with appointing members to a Joint Commission on Reducing Violence Against Indians by February 7, 2021. According to GAO, as of October 15, 2021, no members were appointed, and a draft plan to accomplish this requirement did not include the milestones for all interim steps.

The failure to implement these crucial laws is simply unacceptable. I urge both the DOJ and DOI to enact the provisions included in the “Savanna’s Act” and “Not Invisible Act” that will help Indian Country and uphold the law and the promises of this administration.

I look forward to your swift response and action plan to have these bills fully implemented.

Sincerely,



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Steve Daines  
United States Senator