

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 2, 2021

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Federal, State, Tribal Partners Confront Violence Against Native Americans

Idaho's federal and state court systems and Idaho tribal partners are working this year on actions to curtail domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other violent crime on Idaho's reservations.

The partners launched their effort with an April 1 roundtable, "An Opportunity to Listen and Learn." Federal, state and tribal judges; prosecutors; court staff; law enforcement officers; victim assistance officers; treatment and social workers; law professors; and Idaho State Bar representatives met to learn from each other about the disproportionate incidences of such crimes against Native Americans and the devastating impacts such crimes have upon tribal communities.

The discussion will inform a larger event this fall intended to develop interagency and intertribal relationships to produce meaningful action and lasting change. More information about that event will be shared later this year.

The project follows directives from Congress for federal agencies, including the federal courts and the Department of Justice, to address violent crime committed against Native Americans or occurring on tribal lands. More than four of every five Native American adults have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime, according to the [National Institute of Justice](#), and Native American women who are victims of violence have less access to legal and other necessary services. Laws underlying this year's efforts in Idaho include the [Pro Bono Work to Empower and Represent \(POWER\) Act](#), [Not Invisible Act of 2019](#) and [Savanna's Act](#).

"Idaho's tribal, state and federal courts and governments have opportunities to work collaboratively to stem the tide of violence and assault against Native Americans, and we should work together to make every tribal community as safe as possible." said Judge Ronald E. Bush of the United States District Court for the District of Idaho. "I am heartened and encouraged by the commitment made by each of the participants in this conference to continue working toward actual and meaningful improvements in the justice system for victims of such crimes, and for a dramatic decrease in the frequency of such crimes."

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