

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT  
MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN TASK FORCE

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
PUBLIC MEETING  
November 8, 2019  
1:00 p.m.  
Richard Barr Boardroom  
CNM - SRC Building  
525 Buena Vista Drive, SE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

REPORTED BY: Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
Bean & Associates, Inc.  
Professional Court Reporting Service  
201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

JOB NO.: 3071N (CC)

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

A P P E A R A N C E S

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

- MS. LYNN TRUJILLO, Cabinet Secretary
- MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PENA, Pueblo Representative
- MS. SHARNEN VELARDE, Jicarilla Apache Nation
- MS. BERNALYN VIA, Mescalero Apache Tribe
- FIRST LADY PHEFELIA NEZ, Navajo Nation
- MR. MATTHEW STRAND, DNA
- MS. LINDA SON-STONE, First Nations HealthSource
- MS. ELIZABETH GONZALES, OMI
- MS. BECKY JO JOHNSON, Navajo Nation
- CAPTAIN LEROY GONZALES, Department of Public Safety

FACILITATOR: MS. SAMANTHA WAULS

1           SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Welcome. My name is  
2 Lynn Trujillo. I'm the Cabinet Secretary for the  
3 Indian Affairs Department. I want to thank you all  
4 for being here today for the first meeting of the  
5 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force.

6           And before we begin our day here, I'd like  
7 to ask First Lady Phefelia Nez to please come and  
8 guide us in a prayer as we open up our day today.

9           (Prayer conducted.)

10          SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you, First  
11 Lady. It's my privilege to welcome you here to our  
12 first meeting of our Task Force. The Indian Affairs  
13 Department and the Luján-Grisham Administration is  
14 honored to be convening this amazing group of  
15 leaders. We're confident that together, we can  
16 begin to understand the underlying issues  
17 surrounding the crisis and to begin our work of  
18 diagnosing its root causes.

19          Thank you all for your willingness to join  
20 this Task Force, Task Force Members, for your  
21 commitment to better understand this crisis. I know  
22 that many of you have been working on this issue for  
23 years. And there are so many others that are not  
24 here with us today who have been tireless advocates  
25 for the rights of indigenous women.

1           Today we honor those commitments and we  
2 acknowledge that this Task Force is part of a much  
3 larger movement for justice for women and girls. So  
4 thank you to all of you.

5           And, as you know, the crisis of missing  
6 and murdered indigenous women and girls has reached  
7 epidemic proportions. Despite being the very  
8 foundation of our tribal communities, our women are  
9 being lost every single day. This struggle, which  
10 is largely unknown or ignored by mainstream society,  
11 is perpetuated by its invisibility, and it is only  
12 by shining a light on the crisis and all of its  
13 causes that we can begin to address it and build  
14 healthy and safe indigenous communities.

15           Our women and our girls are the future,  
16 and they are the bedrock of our communities. What  
17 we will examine through the Task Force and seek to  
18 address are the vast inequities that exist in these  
19 cases in term of both resources and attention. And  
20 it's my hope that we can begin to understand the  
21 underlying issues that have caused this violence and  
22 how we can safeguard our most precious resource, our  
23 people.

24           The Luján-Grisham Administration, local  
25 governments, tribal leadership, and this Department

1 will continue to support this body, its  
2 recommendations and findings so that we can  
3 implement lasting solutions. Together I have no  
4 doubt that we can create a state and nation where  
5 our future ancestors, our little girls, can be safe,  
6 nurtured, and empowered.

7 The Governor and this Administration  
8 recognize the fate of missing indigenous women as a  
9 persistent and completely unacceptable status quo.  
10 And this Task Force underscores the Governor's full  
11 focus on restoring justice where it can be restored  
12 and rebuilding communities and relationships.

13 I'd like to thank the sponsors of House  
14 Bill 278 for their work to create this Task Force  
15 and their ongoing commitment to our Native nations.

16 Thank you.

17 Thank you to representative Wanda Johnson,  
18 Representative Andrea Romero, who is here with us  
19 today, Representative Derrick Lente, and  
20 Representative Melanie Stansbury for your leadership  
21 on this critical issue.

22 In closing, I'd just like to say how very  
23 thankful I am for each and every one of you and your  
24 work over the years. Often it's not easy, and it  
25 comes at great sacrifice. So thank you, and thank

1 you for being champions.

2 I also want to just take a moment to thank  
3 many of you at the beginning when I came in and was  
4 visiting with some of you who were sharing stories  
5 of your loved ones who are missing or are gone.  
6 And, hopefully, through this Task Force and our  
7 conversations, we can bring healing to you and your  
8 families and our communities at large. (Native  
9 language spoken.)

10 Thank you.

11 With that I'd like to hand it over to  
12 Christine Means, who is going to also provide some  
13 remarks.

14 MS. CHRISTINE MEANS: Good morning -- good  
15 afternoon. (Native language spoken.) My name is  
16 Christine Means, and I am here this morning with a  
17 very heavy heart, but also very grateful for this  
18 time. So thank you so much.

19 And before we start, I'd like to  
20 acknowledge my family that's here with me today. I  
21 have my mother, Debbie Bullickson [ph] Begay, my  
22 niece, Denisha [ph] Moore, and my brother and my  
23 aunties and my cousins who are here.

24 Thank you so much for being here because  
25 this has been a very long process to be here today

1 and stand before you in front of you all. So -- can  
2 you -- thank you.

3 My sister, Dione -- this is a picture of  
4 her. She was born March 28th, 1975. She was  
5 40 years old. She had just turned 40 when she was  
6 killed. She is the oldest of six children. Her  
7 parents are Leethy [ph] and Debbie Begay. She was a  
8 mother of four children, and she is now a grandma to  
9 four children.

10 Like I said, this has been a process  
11 getting here today, the grief, all of the work that  
12 we've done to come together and stand before you. I  
13 recognize that I am a representative of one woman.  
14 But for one Dione, I know there are 100 other  
15 families who couldn't be here, who don't have the  
16 resources and the connections, just the physical and  
17 financial ability to come to Albuquerque, to park at  
18 CNM and to walk through these doors. I know that  
19 there's more families.

20 I want to recognize that throughout this  
21 process, my mom worked to gather these documents so  
22 that I could prepare these things for today. She  
23 went to the District Attorney's Office. She went to  
24 the Office of Medical Investigator.

25 We are here to ask for your help. And I

1 understand that's what everybody's here to do today.

2 This is a picture of my sister. She's in  
3 the top left in the white shirt. She's pictured  
4 with her daughter, our mom, our grandma and her  
5 first-born grandson. Her name was Dione Ray Begay.  
6 Her married name was Dione Thomas. And this is her  
7 in the black shirt with us. Her siblings, five of  
8 the six of us, just want to give you an idea of who  
9 she was to us.

10 She was my oldest sister. She meant so  
11 many things to me and so many things to the people  
12 that love her. And so I appreciate your time and  
13 energy today. Thank you.

14 Saturday, April 25th, 2015, my sister woke  
15 up in the Colonial Motel in Gallup, New Mexico. And  
16 if you're familiar with Gallup, the Colonial Motel  
17 is one of many motels along Route 66 where people  
18 stay, often criminals, people who are running,  
19 people who are homeless, people who are housing  
20 children, people who are starving.

21 It's a very common thing in Gallup where  
22 these people are living. And that's where she woke  
23 up that day. The Gallup Police Department was  
24 called to her motel room, Room No. 155, three times  
25 that day: the first time at 9:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.,



1 and again at 6:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m., it was 9-1-1,  
2 because she was unconscious.

3 Throughout the day, there were multiple  
4 reports, witnesses that reported violence happening  
5 in the room, arguments, fighting.

6 She was not alone in the room. Throughout  
7 the day, she was with her boyfriend, Anthony Ray.  
8 Anthony Ray was a known offender. They had a long  
9 history of domestic violence, the two of them.  
10 Gallup Police knew who he was. They knew the day  
11 they went to the hotel that it was not a safe  
12 situation.

13 There were witnesses that saw blood on my  
14 sister's face. There was neighbors reporting that  
15 he was yelling, that there was physical abuse  
16 happening in the room.

17 Gallup Police Department went two times.  
18 They talked to Mr. Ray. He said everything was  
19 fine, and then they left her in the room that day.

20 Saturday night, she was taken to Gallup  
21 Indian Medical Center in the evening around  
22 6:00 p.m., because Ray and another man who were in  
23 the room who was a close friend of my sister could  
24 not wake her up. She was unconscious.

25 When she got to the hospital at Gallup

1 Indian Medical Center, she was still unconscious.  
2 The last time that anybody from my family spoke to  
3 her was days before.

4 When she got to the hospital, Anthony made  
5 a statement. Her boyfriend, Anthony Ray, made a  
6 statement to the police that she had fallen, that  
7 she must have hit her head, that they had been  
8 drinking heavily, which later on come to found out  
9 was not the case. We had a toxicology report. She  
10 was not drinking heavily.

11 His statement is what the police ran with.  
12 That night she was flown out to UNM Hospital. She  
13 arrived here in Albuquerque. She was unconscious.  
14 She had bruises all over her body. She had tubes  
15 going in and out of her body to keep her alive.

16 And at that time, the UNM Hospital staff  
17 reported to us that she probably won't make it, and,  
18 if she did make it, the chances of her brain being  
19 able to function at a rate that -- in a way that was  
20 healthy for her to live were going to be very low.

21 So we knew upon her arrival at UNMH that  
22 this was very serious. And we knew that he had done  
23 this to her. So we immediately we began contacting  
24 the police.

25 Later on, after two months had passed, we

1 received the official OMI report. The official  
2 cause of death was blunt force trauma to the head.

3 The investigation immediately began in  
4 April with Gallup Police Department. These are some  
5 of the newspaper clippings from the days that  
6 followed her death.

7 The police made statements that it was  
8 suspicious, they were actively investigating it as a  
9 homicide. And so we were relieved. We were happy.  
10 We worked with them. We supported everything that  
11 they were doing as police.

12 Anthony Ray was a known offender. He had  
13 a long history of felony charges. The police knew  
14 him as a violent, abusive boyfriend to my sister.

15 In the days following, we did everything  
16 we were supposed to do. We worked with the police.  
17 We went in person to the police office, the police  
18 station. We met with the District Attorney. We  
19 were cooperative with the detective. We did  
20 everything that they wanted us to do.

21 They said, "Let us do our jobs. We know  
22 it was Anthony Ray." So we said okay. We backed  
23 off.

24 My mom called the detective to make sure  
25 that they were getting the correct and the right

1 interviews for the witnesses throughout the day,  
2 because we just -- we didn't believe the system, the  
3 way they had dropped the ball in so many ways on her  
4 case, in the way that they reported it in the day  
5 that unfolded, our beliefs that they were capable of  
6 handling her case were so low that we began to build  
7 our own case.

8 We start to make phone calls, in-person  
9 visits. We logged them all. My mom did a very good  
10 job of keeping record of all of the communication  
11 that happened between us and the police department,  
12 and we're finding out now that those records were  
13 really important, because we have documentation of  
14 how many times we've attempted communication and how  
15 many times the phone calls were returned.

16 Every phone call, every meeting, every  
17 time we got an update was initiated by us. The  
18 phone calls were rarely returned. We did everything  
19 to communicate with them our expectations that we  
20 wanted charges filed.

21 As of today, November 2019, it has been  
22 over four years. No charges have been filed. The  
23 District Attorney has not made any attempts to go  
24 forward with pressing charges.

25 Anthony Ray spent hours -- a few hours in

1 custody for questioning at the very beginning, the  
2 night of when all of this happened as my sister was  
3 coming to UNM Hospital. And then they released him.  
4 They have got multiple witnesses. They've got  
5 reports. They just have not done anything about it.

6 We met with the District Attorney last  
7 year and were dismissed. The attitude, the  
8 negligence let us know that this was not a priority,  
9 that they were perfectly okay with the way the case  
10 was going. They weren't happy with the way Gallup  
11 Police Department handle their investigation, but  
12 they let us know in their attitude that the District  
13 Attorney has no intentions of doing anything about  
14 this.

15 So, at this point in time, my sister's  
16 death is unclassified. In the recent report that  
17 came out about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women  
18 in the State of New Mexico, she does not come up on  
19 those reports because the charges have not been  
20 filed.

21 At this point in time, her official ruling  
22 of death is "Undetermined," and we cannot, as a  
23 family, do anything to change that. We've done  
24 everything. We've made the calls; we've gone in  
25 person. It will not be classified as a homicide

1 because we have seven years of a statute of  
2 limitations to press for charges against her  
3 boyfriend, and if nothing happens from outside  
4 political public pressure, this we know. The  
5 charges will not go.

6 Because we can go and sit at the District  
7 Attorney's office. We can make the phone calls; we  
8 can go in person; we can demand justice. We can be  
9 as polished, polite, respectful, educated as we want  
10 to be on all of this, and it will not move the  
11 system that has allowed for this to go on for so  
12 long.

13 So today there's a few things that I would  
14 like to ask you for. And that is your help. We  
15 want charges filed for the death of my sister. She  
16 was a murder victim. It was homicide. And the  
17 category, the way that it was handled, was it was a  
18 fatality as a direct result of domestic violence.  
19 And it will not be categorized as this.

20 We need the public and the political  
21 pressure from people sitting in these seats here to  
22 help us change the system in Gallup; not only change  
23 it, because it -- it isn't enough to be changed,  
24 it's to call them out for their outright negligence.

25 The precedent has been set in Gallup,

1 New Mexico. If you want to get away with murder, do  
2 it there, and make sure that it's a Native woman,  
3 because they won't come looking for who did it for  
4 you. This, I know. I've seen it.

5 And my sister is one of a few from that  
6 time that I know this happened to. Since this has  
7 happened, there have been many more. They are  
8 unknown; they are a name; they're cases sitting in  
9 the files of Gallup Police Department and the  
10 District Attorney's Office.

11 Nobody is looking for a way to solve them.  
12 Their families do not have the ability to go down  
13 there and advocate for them. They are the most  
14 vulnerable part of our community. And it is being  
15 exploited because of outright racism and gross  
16 negligence on the part of these legal systems.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. CHRISTINE MEANS: Thank you. If you  
19 have -- this is my contact information, my phone  
20 number and personal e-mail. I'm easy to reach. If  
21 there is any way that you can help us, support us,  
22 keep us in your processes, in your decisions as you  
23 go throughout this time, we appreciate it. Because  
24 my full intentions are to see the day that not only  
25 this man serves time in jail, goes to jail for what

1 he's done, because he's out on the streets, he's out  
2 on the run, not only that, but for also calling out  
3 the system in Gallup that allows for this to happen,  
4 because the system has enabled him to do this to her  
5 and all the other women on the streets.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I just wanted to take  
9 a moment to thank Christine and your family. I did  
10 get to meet your mother.

11 Stephanie Salazar, who's really a credit,  
12 has really been spearheading this effort for the  
13 Department of Indian Affairs. I want to thank them  
14 for sharing Dione with us.

15 We were able to meet with Christine and  
16 some of her sisters and Dione's daughters and hear  
17 their story from them. And I know that this is just  
18 one story of many stories that exist out there. But  
19 I, really -- as a Department -- and I want to thank  
20 you for sharing Dione with us, because I think it  
21 helps ground us and guide us in the work that we're  
22 going to be doing as a Task Force, knowing that this  
23 is just one story of many people that are out there.

24 So I want to really thank you and your  
25 family and the work that you're -- you're doing



1 every day trying to bring justice to Dione.

2 Thank you.

3 So with that, we're going to ask the Task  
4 Force members to briefly introduce themselves, and  
5 then we'll be moving along.

6 Stephanie -- sorry -- Samantha Wauls is  
7 going to facilitate the conversation. After hearing  
8 Dione's story, we want to let you know that there  
9 are advocates here from UNM who are in the back of  
10 the room in case anybody needs some space or wants  
11 to talk with somebody. You know, I think they're  
12 back there.

13 We just want to acknowledge that this is  
14 a -- a very -- very emotional -- people can be  
15 triggered, and so we want to respect people. We  
16 really encourage people to engage in self-care for  
17 themselves. And so we have those resources  
18 available.

19 So thank you.

20 So if I can start here, if you can briefly  
21 introduce yourself.

22 MS. LINDA SON-STONE: Good afternoon,  
23 everybody. My name is Linda Stone, and I'm the  
24 director of First Nations Community HealthSource,  
25 which is an urban Indian health center in

1 Albuquerque.

2 MS. BECKY JOHNSON: My name is Becky  
3 Johnson. I come from Shiprock, New Mexico. I am  
4 representing the victim survivors on the Task Force.

5 MS. BERNALYN VIA: (Native language  
6 spoken.)

7 Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Gina  
8 Cochise Via. I'm a member of the Mescalero Apache  
9 Tribe, and I serve on the Mescalero Apache Tribal  
10 Council.

11 MS. SHARNEN VELARDE: Good afternoon,  
12 everyone. My name is Sharnen Velarde. I am from  
13 Dulce, New Mexico. I'm an enrolled member of the  
14 Jicarilla Apache Nation. I am also half-Navajo from  
15 [inaudible], New Mexico.

16 I am here today because I am a domestic  
17 violence survivor myself. This work is very  
18 important to me. It's important to the victims that  
19 I serve and to women in my community.

20 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: Good afternoon,  
21 everybody. My name is Brenda Gonzales, and I am  
22 with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice  
23 Services. And I am the Assistant Special  
24 Agent-in-Charge.

25 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: (Native language

1 spoken.) My name is Beata Tsosie-Peña, and I'm from  
2 Santa Clara Pueblo, and I'm here representing pueblo  
3 communities.

4 FIRST LADY NEZ: (Native language spoken.)  
5 Thank you. I'm representing the Navajo  
6 Nation as the First Lady.

7 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: Good morning,  
8 everybody. My name is Captain Velasquez. I am  
9 representing the New Mexico State Police. I serve  
10 as a district commander for one of our districts,  
11 which encompasses Cibola, McKinley County, and also  
12 serve as a tribal liaison. I am an enrolled member  
13 of the Laguna Pueblo. That's where I also live.

14 MAJOR ROMERO: My name is Matthew Romero.  
15 I'm a Major with the State Police, the uniformed  
16 division. I supervise the areas of Gallup,  
17 Albuquerque, Socorro, and Farmington; so I have a  
18 lot of tribal jurisdiction in my territory.

19 MS. ELIZABETH GONZALES: Good afternoon,  
20 everyone. My name is Elizabeth Gonzales. I am the  
21 supervisor of the investigations at the Office of  
22 the Medical Investigator. In January, I'll be  
23 starting my 20th year there. So I have passion when  
24 it comes to anything that has to deal with death.

25 MR. MATTHEW STRAND: Good afternoon. My

1 name is Matthew Strand. Thank you for being here.  
2 I represent DNA People's Legal Services in  
3 Farmington. I practice primarily family law.  
4 Specifically, domestic violence is probably the vast  
5 majority of my caseload.

6 I also used to -- excuse me. I used to be  
7 an assistant district attorney and a prosecutor of  
8 domestic violence felonies and domestic matters.

9 Thank you.

10 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you. We also  
11 have members of the Indian Affairs Department here,  
12 if they'll all stand. Our Deputy Secretary, Nadine  
13 Padilla, is with us today. Keegan King; he's our  
14 Communications and Bureau Chief of Legislative  
15 Affairs. Stephanie Salazar, who's our Senior Policy  
16 Analyst and who really has done a lot of work in  
17 terms of the Task Force. And then Sherrie Catanach,  
18 who's here as a member -- okay, back there -- our PR  
19 Coordinator.

20 So if you need anything, please see any of  
21 us. We're here to help assist you.

22 And then I'll hand it over to Samantha to  
23 introduce herself.

24 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you, Secretary.  
25 I also want to say thank you, Christine, for sharing

1 your story, to your family who's here today. I also  
2 just want to welcome all of you who are here sharing  
3 in this space. We're going to get into some really  
4 deep emotional things. And so I just want to show  
5 my respect and honor for you all coming and sharing  
6 your thoughts and hearts with us today.

7 My name is Samantha Wauls. I am working  
8 with the Indian Affairs Department as the project  
9 assistant for the Task Force; so I will be  
10 facilitating the meetings, and I will be writing the  
11 final report of recommendation that will be given to  
12 the State. So, yeah, let's go ahead and get  
13 started.

14 I do want to just go over a couple of  
15 little things before we get into the discussion.  
16 Restrooms are right out the door to your left. So  
17 for those of you, if you need to take a break at any  
18 point, just go ahead and excuse yourselves. We will  
19 not be having a break during -- for the rest of the  
20 Task Force meeting today, so feel free to leave on  
21 your own and when you need to.

22 Again, we do have advocates in the back of  
23 the room, so at any time if you need to take care of  
24 yourselves or you need someone to talk to, feel free  
25 to pull them to the side and they are there for you.

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1           We also want to encourage those of you who  
2 are attending today to share your input and feedback  
3 throughout today's meeting. So we have some posters  
4 on the wall over here where we are collecting  
5 feedback on just what do you want to see in the  
6 report, what are some goals for the Task Force, and  
7 whatever feedback or input you want to share,  
8 whether it's your story or things that you want to  
9 see get done within this Task Force or about this  
10 issue.

11           We have sticky notes that are in the back,  
12 so where the sign-in sheet is, feel free to grab a  
13 couple of pages and write down your comments and  
14 feedback and give it to any one of the Department  
15 staff that you see here today.

16           Stephanie is the point person. So you  
17 want to share that feedback, make sure you get it to  
18 her.

19           We -- the Task Force meetings will be  
20 transcribed using audio and video recording, and we  
21 do have a transcriptionist here today. So the  
22 things that we share will be recorded; so that way  
23 we are able to review the input and put together a  
24 really comprehensive and meaningful report at the  
25 end of this.

1           We want to make sure that Task Force  
2 meetings are a safe space at all times. So I just  
3 ask that you all show respect to everyone that is  
4 here, just, you know, represent yourselves just with  
5 dignity and respect, because people are going to be  
6 sharing some very vulnerable things and we want to  
7 just honor them.

8           Please turn your phone on silent. Again  
9 if you need to take care of yourself or your family,  
10 feel free to excuse yourselves at any time.

11           And that's all. So let's go ahead and get  
12 into this.

13           So our objective here today is to really  
14 define the Task Force goals and develop a strategy  
15 for understanding the full extent of the Missing and  
16 Murdered Indigenous Women crisis within the state.  
17 We also want to create a final report that meets the  
18 requirements of the legislation, House Bill 278.

19           So you all should have received the  
20 agenda. But, essentially, what we will be covering  
21 is we're going to go over just some Task Force  
22 protocols, so that everyone is clear on how we are  
23 going to be conducting these Task Force meetings.

24           We will get into a discussion to really  
25 address the crisis of the Missing and Murdered

1 Indigenous Women. The discussion piece today will  
2 just be a starter. We probably won't cover  
3 everything. But this is to start the conversation  
4 so we can really narrow and define these goals of  
5 the Task Force, and, in our meeting, by opening it  
6 up to the public so that you all in attendance today  
7 can share your feedback and input.

8 So, Task Force Members, you all were sent  
9 a community agreement document that really outlined  
10 what we can expect of you all, also what your roles  
11 and responsibilities will be, and just some  
12 logistics about how the Task Force meeting is going  
13 to be organized. So I just want to go through a  
14 couple of those, the expectations and commitments  
15 that we would like to see from you all.

16 We definitely want -- we expect that you  
17 all will show honor and respect to the Missing and  
18 Murdered Indigenous Women and those impacted through  
19 your committed effort on the Task Force.

20 We want you all to participate actively in  
21 the Task Force and subcommittee meetings, respect  
22 the opinions of others -- of other Task Force  
23 members and the public, and also the role of the  
24 Chair.

25 Make sure that you're just responding to



1 tasks and deadlines and things that we request of  
2 you, the Department requests of you all.

3 And then we would also like for you all to  
4 represent the Task Force at external community  
5 events. And those activities will be coordinated  
6 with the Department.

7 Now, also in that document, which it is in  
8 your packet -- or -- is it in their packet?

9 MS. STEPHANIE SALAZAR: Yes.

10 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: It should be in your  
11 packet. If you all want to follow along I'm just  
12 going to briefly go through this.

13 But part of the Task Force is really  
14 comprised of -- we have the medical examiner,  
15 federal officials, state officials, advocates,  
16 including survivors, direct service providers,  
17 tribal officials, legal service providers and law  
18 enforcement.

19 I want you all to be thinking about what  
20 perspective of voices are not represented on this  
21 Task Force. And later on when we get to the  
22 discussion piece, I want you to be thinking about  
23 who do we need to be reaching out to to bring those  
24 perspectives to the space.

25 All right. Your essential role -- our

1 essential role as a Task Force is to meet the  
2 legislative requirements of House Bill 278. And  
3 according to that bill, we are going to be  
4 conducting a study to determine how to increase  
5 state resources for reporting.

6 We want to identify the full extent of the  
7 issue. We want to work with tribal governments and  
8 communities. And we want to report those findings  
9 in a final report to the State.

10 Some things we also want you to be aware  
11 of is IPRA guidelines that we will need to be in  
12 compliance with. So I'm going to hand it over to  
13 Stephanie to talk about that.

14 MS. STEPHANIE SALAZAR: Okay. Thank you,  
15 everyone.

16 Real quickly -- I just wanted just to take  
17 a few minutes -- everyone was provided in their  
18 packets with an IPRA PowerPoint presentation. This  
19 is just going through a few things.

20 Essentially, IPRA stands for the  
21 Inspection of Public Records Act. This is in  
22 statute, New Mexico -- NMSA Sections 14-2-1.

23 What it -- why is IPRA important to us in  
24 our work?

25 Basically, IPRA says that the public has a

1 right to access public records. And this is one of  
2 the fundamental rights afforded to people within a  
3 democracy. So a lot of what we're doing here is  
4 subject to IPRA. The public has a right to know  
5 the -- basically, the purpose of this is  
6 transparency. We want to be transparent with the  
7 public. The public has a right to know essentially  
8 our work, our communications. The state policy is  
9 an open government and transparency.

10 So for our work for the Task Force, one  
11 thing that we do recommend, because a lot of our  
12 communications are subject to that inspection, we  
13 recommend that all of our Task Force members create  
14 a new e-mail address to be used solely for Task  
15 Force work. This is in the event that somebody gets  
16 a request from the public for any type of  
17 correspondence or communications. We want to ensure  
18 that if we have to go through, we don't have to go  
19 through all of your personal e-mails, that it's kind  
20 of separated -- separate, your personal work from  
21 the work of the Task Force.

22 So in a lot of our correspondence with  
23 Samantha, she created a new e-mail address. Her  
24 e-mail is a good format for what we would recommend  
25 the Task Force members create for their own

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1 correspondence.

2 I think that one important thing is, if  
3 you are -- if you do get a request to inspect your  
4 records, that you let us know immediately. There  
5 are very specific timelines within the law. We have  
6 to respond to those requests within a set time  
7 frame. So it's important that we know immediately.

8 So as soon as you get any type of request,  
9 please let Samantha or I know.

10 If it's a verbal request, there are  
11 certain requirements for that. If it's a written  
12 request, we need to know that as soon as possible.

13 And I think our goal here -- our goal will  
14 always be, with this Task Force, is to be open and  
15 transparent, to include the public, to answer the  
16 questions that are raised, and, you know, to -- to  
17 involve the public as much as possible.

18 So this just goes to our goal in the  
19 Department to have open lines of communication, but  
20 also to protect each of you and your personal  
21 information as well.

22 So we would recommend creating a separate  
23 e-mail account. Please review the IPRA PowerPoint.  
24 If you have specific questions, you can come talk to  
25 me after -- after the meeting today and we can

1 discuss some of that.

2 But I just want to give it back to  
3 Samantha. That was just a super, really quick  
4 overview. But I think the main point is that State  
5 law is very clear that every person has a right to  
6 inspect public records of the State. So contact me  
7 if you have any questions.

8 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Okay. Just moving  
9 right along, because I do want to make sure that we  
10 have enough time to really get into the discussion  
11 portion later today.

12 So meeting logistics. We sent out a  
13 survey to Task Force members. If you have not yet  
14 completed that survey, please do so as soon as  
15 possible. But as of right now, the general  
16 consensus for how much the Task Force should meet is  
17 monthly. And the duration of those meetings should  
18 be anywhere from four to eight hours.

19 We are considering maybe an overnight  
20 meeting, if it's necessary to complete the -- the  
21 goals of the legislation.

22 Meeting notes will be made available to  
23 the Task Force members. And I'm sure they're going  
24 to be available to the public as well.

25 There will be translation and other ADA

1 accommodations provided. We will do our best to  
2 make sure that the meetings are accessible to  
3 everyone, Task Force members and the public, to  
4 really optimize participation from the community.

5 We are going to do our best to make sure  
6 there's a Safe Room. Our counselors available at  
7 every Task Force meeting. Again, all Task Force  
8 meetings will be transcribed, and if you have  
9 inquiries about the agenda, please send them to  
10 myself. And there is my e-mail address for those --  
11 for those -- everyone else that's not in the Task  
12 Force. If you need my e-mail, please see me after  
13 the meeting ends.

14 So I want to spend a little bit of time  
15 right now to talk about how do we ensure that these  
16 meetings are a safe space for people to share  
17 themselves, share their ideas, their experiences and  
18 their stories at these Task Force meetings.

19 So we wanted to open it up to the Task  
20 Force to give input on what should be some guiding  
21 principles, norms, or language that should be  
22 implemented at every meeting.

23 And we're going to have one of the staff  
24 members write these down. So there's a mic right  
25 there, too.

1           But some of the things that the Department  
2 came up with is that we want to definitely build and  
3 establish trust amongst each other; so making sure  
4 we're getting to know each other and that we're  
5 being truthful and honest and respectful.

6           We always want to make sure that we're  
7 focused on the mission and the purpose of this Task  
8 Force coming together. And this is really -- we  
9 need to honor what we're here to do, which is to  
10 honor the women that are impacted by -- you know,  
11 through violence and who -- the families that are  
12 wondering where their loved ones are. So always  
13 keep that at the forefront of your mind and make  
14 sure that your actions and words align with that  
15 purpose and mission.

16           Always assume good intent from the  
17 comments that you hear. If there is any conflict  
18 that arises -- people will have different ideas and  
19 opinions. Just make sure you remain respectful and  
20 resolve those quickly.

21           And then just be mindful of your  
22 participation. And one way to do that is to model  
23 the step-up step-back framework, which is make sure  
24 that you're allowing others to be able to share  
25 their voice in that space and you are mindful of how

1 much you are sharing.

2 So I'll put it up to the Task Force. Do  
3 you have any ideas -- any other ideas about how we  
4 keep this space safe and open for people to share  
5 their input?

6 Any ideas?

7 Or are we good with what's on this board  
8 that's on the PowerPoint?

9 (No response.)

10 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: I'm going to assume  
11 that we're good to go. All right.

12 In terms of communication between the Task  
13 Force, Stephanie and myself will be some of the main  
14 people that will be reaching out to you all and  
15 corresponding about different tasks that we need to  
16 complete. We will be utilizing e-mails; so creating  
17 those separate e-mails is going to be important and  
18 you should do them as soon as you can.

19 We also want to make sure that we're  
20 responding to -- that we have a protocol for  
21 responding to public and media inquiries. So if you  
22 do get any media requests, reach out to Keegan.  
23 That information is also in your community agreement  
24 packet.

25 If you get IPRA's, reach out to Stephanie



1 or myself.

2 And based on the survey feedback from the  
3 Task Force members, it looks like we will be  
4 utilizing Google Docs and/or Dropbox. That was the  
5 preferred method of storing and sharing information.

6 I also want to acknowledge the fact that  
7 some of you, especially those of you who work  
8 directly with victims of violence and crime, that  
9 you may have your own privacy and confidentiality  
10 standards that you must adhere to. So we want you  
11 to adhere to that here as well.

12 And the general tone is that you should --  
13 unless you, yourself, as a survivor, you want to  
14 share that personal identifying information, if you  
15 are sharing stories from the work that you do or the  
16 individual you work with, do not disclose any  
17 identifying information about that victim or  
18 survivor.

19 The Secretary touched on this a little bit  
20 in the beginning. This is very difficult work to  
21 do. I've been working with victims of crime now for  
22 over four years. And I just came back from a break,  
23 a self-care break from the vicarious trauma that I  
24 endure doing this work. And so we want to make sure  
25 that you all are taking care of yourselves and

1 getting the support that you need to do this work.

2 Basically, vicarious trauma, or what some  
3 people call "secondary trauma," is just the  
4 challenge that professionals working in the field of  
5 victim services, law enforcement, or emergency  
6 medical services or other allied professional  
7 services experience due to their continued exposure  
8 to victims of trauma and violence. So some tips to  
9 take care yourselves.

10 Just make sure you're taking time to  
11 engage socially, creatively in other leisure  
12 activities to get your mind off of things. Seek  
13 therapy and professional assistance when needed.  
14 Stayed connected with family and friends.

15 And then something that I like to follow  
16 is make sure you're getting enough rest, that you  
17 get away when you need to, and that you're, you  
18 know, engaging in fun activities.

19 And here are some resources to learn more  
20 about how to cope with vicarious trauma.

21 Now, this Task Force is going to need to  
22 engage victims and survivors and those impacted by  
23 the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women  
24 in order to really tell or understand the scope  
25 of -- of this issue.

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1           And so we want to now open it up to talk  
2 about how do we gather survivor testimony, and what  
3 are some protocols for Task Force members and the  
4 Department to begin meeting with survivors of  
5 violence and their family members?

6           Does anybody have any strategies about how  
7 we go about either collecting that survivor  
8 testimony?

9           MS. BECKY JOHNSON: Maybe one way would be  
10 to put it out on social media, asking if anybody  
11 would be willing to share their story or want to  
12 share their story. Social media seems to be big,  
13 and it reaches people throughout different  
14 communities.

15           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you.

16           MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: I think it's  
17 important that we're able to hold space with  
18 community in community forums, that there's longer  
19 time frames for public comment, and that there's  
20 also intergenerational intention on holding space  
21 with elders in the communities, virtual leaders,  
22 that we're really bringing in all of our cultural  
23 strengths to really hold this -- these stories and  
24 experiences.

25           Because it is -- there is varying

1 protocols, I know, in dealing with those who have  
2 passed away, depending on the nations. And so just  
3 maybe having more -- being more culturally aware of  
4 the different practices within each other's  
5 communities so that we're more aware of what  
6 those -- what those are for each other.

7 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: That was a great  
8 input. And just to kind of reiterate for staff  
9 who's writing this down. But you said hosting  
10 community forums, extending the public discussion  
11 portion of the Task Force meeting, more time, and  
12 then making sure that during those community forums  
13 when we are working with survivors, that we respect  
14 and honor their unique traditions and culture.

15 Any other Task Force member want to share  
16 their input on our strategies for engaging survivors  
17 and those impacted?

18 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: I have one. I don't  
19 need that.

20 One of the things that some people might  
21 not want to do is not be interviewed  
22 person-to-person or by video. So, you know, having  
23 that option and allowing them to write their story  
24 down, you know, giving that input.

25 And just like the public comment, you

1 know, the Task Force, maybe setting -- a setting in  
2 these pueblos and tribes and areas where we go out  
3 there to them, where they're more comfortable, and,  
4 you know, letting them give their story there,  
5 instead of, you know, "Hey, you can tell your story,  
6 but you've got to come to CNM in Albuquerque." That  
7 might be a little bit hard for them to do.

8 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Yeah. So meeting in  
9 those respective communities. That's good.

10 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I think, Samantha,  
11 another thing that has come up in terms of ideas is,  
12 like, a space where, if people feel comfortable -- I  
13 don't know how to describe it. Kind of think like  
14 Big Brother, where they have, like, the room where  
15 you can go in and do a recording. People might want  
16 to share a story and testimony and talk about their  
17 family members where they don't need to be with a  
18 bunch of people, but feeling comfortable to provide  
19 that testimony might be another way, through video  
20 or something like that, where we could capture that.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: So I'm hearing  
22 through social media or some type of online platform  
23 for people to write in their stories, meeting with  
24 them in their community, and then also having some  
25 larger community forums and opportunities for people

1 to come and share their stories.

2 How does the Task Force feel about  
3 individually, you all meeting with survivors and  
4 gathering testimony? Any thoughts about that?

5 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: I think that's going  
6 to be a critical element that we all need to  
7 embrace.

8 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Can you say that  
9 again?

10 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: I say that's going  
11 to be a critical element that we all need to  
12 embrace.

13 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: And I think for some  
14 of you who maybe work more often directly with  
15 victim survivors, that will be easier. And so I  
16 think later on we may want to get into deeper  
17 discussion about how we can support each other to do  
18 that work.

19 And then I also notice, in the feedback  
20 survey, that folks wanted to -- suggested having a  
21 training where we train people on how to interview  
22 or meet with survivors.

23 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Yeah. And I think  
24 it's so vital to have -- be grounded and have that  
25 basis. Like I said, it was told [inaudible] to me

1 with -- in hearing about Dione's story. Because  
2 even in that short time that they were talking with  
3 me, it really pointed out a couple of issues, just  
4 systematically, that happened within the story of  
5 Dione.

6 It was grounded all in Dione and who she  
7 is as a person. But then through what the family  
8 was sharing with me, I was able to better, like,  
9 understand, like, what were the challenges that they  
10 faced in terms of the legal systems that they were  
11 challenged with. And so I think that those are  
12 going to be vital to hear people's experience of  
13 just the systems, to understand where they break  
14 down or maybe are not providing justice or access,  
15 which will be vital to what we're doing.

16 I also, for myself, you know, would like  
17 to have some kind of protocols or better  
18 understanding of -- you know, I feel like I'm a  
19 pretty thoughtful and respectful person. But, you  
20 know, this hasn't happened to me or my family. And  
21 so how do I care for and honor what people are  
22 sharing with me in a really good way?

23 So I would, for me, benefit from having  
24 some better understanding in terms of how we move  
25 forward in hearing testimony of people that they

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1 want to share.

2 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any thoughts about  
3 what the Secretary just brought up?

4 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: I'm just thinking  
5 that a lot of the -- the root causes of this  
6 violence, a lot of it is systemic. A lot of it is  
7 because things happening within our own communities,  
8 our own people, our own legal and capital  
9 structures.

10 And so I think it's important to even have  
11 confidentiality options when talking with us and  
12 some kind of concrete follow-through so that people  
13 aren't just sharing with us and then there's no  
14 follow-up or resources given to them after being  
15 open.

16 And I know that -- I would hope there's  
17 some kind of vetting process, too, before -- I know,  
18 like, there's people filming these things. But,  
19 just, like, that -- that they're really fully  
20 informed on what -- what's going to happen with  
21 their story before it comes into this space.

22 And also that we're all open-minded as  
23 part of this committee in really being -- not being  
24 afraid to look at the root causes and truth of  
25 systemic oppression that can lead to violence on our



1 peoples. And a lot of times that's having to  
2 look -- be really honest and look at what's really  
3 going on in our communities and has been going on.

4 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: That's really  
5 important. So protocols for approaching that -- you  
6 know, approaching the interview with a survivor,  
7 protocols for following up and making sure, making  
8 up some confidentiality document so they're aware of  
9 how their story will be utilized or what they can  
10 and cannot share, something like that.

11 MS. SHARNEN VELARDE: I facilitate a  
12 women's domestic violence and survival support group  
13 once weekly. I know three women on the top of my  
14 head right now who would be more than willing to  
15 share their story.

16 It's very important, because they feel  
17 just because we come from a very rural town, a very  
18 small town, that their voices are not heard.  
19 Whether it be in tribal court or state court, they  
20 feel like their voices are just heard just within  
21 our -- our support session.

22 So I know three women right now on the top  
23 of my head that would be more than willing to share  
24 their story.

25 MS. LINDA SON-STONE: So we're also a

1 direct service provider. We -- we have a domestic  
2 violence program as well as a victim of crimes and  
3 two human trafficking programs. And I think,  
4 similarly, some of the women that we work with would  
5 be more than happy to share their story to help  
6 other women. And so I think that that could be also  
7 an option.

8 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: So Linda and -- your  
9 name again? --

10 MS. SHARNEN VELARDE: Me?

11 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Yes.

12 MS. SHARNEN VELARDE: Sharnen Velarde.

13 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: So Linda and Sharnen,  
14 we'll definitely follow up with you two about  
15 coordinating gathering their testimony.

16 Any ideas?

17 I'm glad that those of you work for, you  
18 know, services on the ground.

19 Any ideas from the law enforcement side  
20 how to approach or interview survivors?

21 MAJOR ROMERO: I think that we could -- we  
22 know some of the victims in some cases, and we could  
23 reach out to them and see if there are stories that  
24 they want to share. I think on our end through our  
25 district commanders, such as Captain Velasquez and

1 other areas that we work in, we can do that,  
2 coordinate that.

3 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: We're going to keep  
4 the mic going around just so that everyone can hear.

5 MAJOR ROMERO: Did you guys -- did nobody  
6 hear me? I was just saying there are district  
7 managers throughout the state. We could gather some  
8 names of some people or some victims. We have  
9 victim advocates within our department that could  
10 reach out, and that's what they do. And we could  
11 have them gather some of this information for us and  
12 provide that.

13 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other thoughts?

14 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: I'm with BIA OFS.  
15 And today I have here with me our acting director,  
16 Kathy Howkumi. And she is in charge of our victim  
17 services.

18 Kathy, if you can just stand up real  
19 quick?

20 (Ms. Howkumi responds.)

21 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: So me and her are  
22 kind of spearheading this on in collaboration, because I  
23 wouldn't be able to do my job without Kathy.  
24 Because when it comes to assisting victims, she's  
25 always there to lend a helping hand to provide

1 services and just to be there and listen to these  
2 victims.

3 There's times when she goes and contacts  
4 them for me. And it just shows that, you know,  
5 we're in constant communication with the victims.

6 And me and her, like I said, both work for  
7 BIA. I used to be the chief at one of our northern  
8 agencies. And they're pretty tight-knit. And I  
9 think with Kathy's help, we can probably do some  
10 community outreach, not only to the Northern Pueblos  
11 but also to the Southern Pueblos, and just to inform  
12 everyone what our initiative is and to hear some  
13 stories as well and bring back here.

14 MS. BEATA TSOSIE: I have a question. So  
15 if we get approached from a survivor in the  
16 community, can we talk to them as individuals? Or  
17 do we have to kind of go through the Task Force? I  
18 don't know. How does that work?

19 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: That's why we're  
20 having these discussions. I mean, to me, it seems  
21 like there's a couple of roles, and we can clearly  
22 define that with the person who approached you.  
23 They might want to talk with you and share their  
24 story with just you, Beata. Or knowing you're part  
25 of the Task Force, they might want to share with

1 that.

2 I think the more we can have some common  
3 understanding here and guiding principles, and  
4 then -- and how open and honest we are about how  
5 anybody who approaches us will help guide us. I  
6 think it's going to be an individual call -- you  
7 know, understanding what that means, was, for me, if  
8 that happened to me, it's like, "Well, you know, I  
9 sit on the Task Force, and how are you approaching  
10 me? Are you approaching me as Lynn who lives at  
11 Sandia, you want to just talk, which I respect, or  
12 are you coming -- I sit on a Task Force. Are you  
13 asking me to -- do you want to share that story, and  
14 what does that look like? Do I have permission to  
15 share parts of your story? What does that look  
16 like?"

17 I think it going to be -- for all of us to  
18 try to have some of this protocol in place, it's  
19 really going to be matter of -- I think we're all  
20 guided by -- I don't know if it was the shared  
21 values, but, really, respect, right, and what we're  
22 doing here. And that's what's guiding me in  
23 whatever work that I'm going to be doing. I don't  
24 know if that helps or not.

25 MS. BEATA TSOSIE: Uh-huh.

1           FIRST LADY NEZ: Okay. So for the Navajo  
2 Nation, we have a group. It's the Missing and  
3 Murdered Dine Relatives. And they've been --  
4 they're scheduled to do their third forum. And  
5 that's part of what they've been doing, gathering  
6 and getting people to share their stories.

7           And so I guess that was my question, how  
8 do we just incorporate or collaborate with them on  
9 some level to -- [inaudible] we've already done part  
10 of this work already.

11          MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: We definitely want to  
12 collaborate and we definitely want to hear, even  
13 from them, how their protocols about what's working  
14 right for them. So we definitely will be connecting  
15 and try to reach out to them to collaborate.

16          But to come back to your point, Beata,  
17 about what are the protocols if we are approached by  
18 a survivor and they're wanting to tell our story, I  
19 know that, just from my personal background, I think  
20 if someone is coming to you and they're wanting to  
21 share their experience with you, there's obviously a  
22 level of trust, and they may need someone at that  
23 moment to speak to.

24          So I don't want to recommend that we turn  
25 anyone away during that moment. But like Secretary

1 said, maybe following up and asking them do they  
2 feel comfortable sharing their experiences with the  
3 Task Force and the role that you do.

4 But are there any other ideas or thoughts  
5 about what to do when we get approached?

6 (Hands raised in audience.)

7 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: We have some  
8 community.

9 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Maybe we should ask.  
10 I appreciate -- let's see. I appreciate -- I always  
11 have challenges with technology. So I know that we  
12 have an agenda, and it's important to try to adhere  
13 to an agenda. But I think that this is the beauty,  
14 and that we have -- as a Task Force to do this for  
15 the first time here that we have this flexibility  
16 and allow for public participation.

17 This is really important, because many of  
18 you who are out there are going to help guide us,  
19 right, in what we're doing. And so I think that if  
20 we can provide a little bit of that space -- and I  
21 also think that throughout this process, anyone who  
22 is here, other folks, if you have any type of  
23 feedback whatsoever, please, please, I ask you to  
24 give it to us, because your words are going to help  
25 guide what we're doing here.

1           And it is so important because not one  
2 person around this table, not -- I mean, I don't  
3 have the answer for what we're embarking on. And so  
4 it's going to take -- as many of us Native people  
5 know, right, we all come together when we're doing  
6 something. It's going to take all of us.

7           So I just invite you, in whatever way you  
8 feel comfortable, to please share with us and help  
9 guide us. That's all I ask for. And your prayers  
10 in what we're doing. So I think if we can open this  
11 up, it might help us with some ideas about how we  
12 can engage especially from those of you who are  
13 tireless advocates. We can learn a lot from you,  
14 and we're open to that. So I just want to provide  
15 that.

16           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Can you hear me? Oh,  
17 here we go. All right. So let's go ahead and hear  
18 from folks.

19           FROM THE FLOOR: Okay. (Native language  
20 spoken.)

21           Good afternoon. My name is Charlotte  
22 Begay, aunt of Dione.

23           When we were first informed and we learned  
24 of her passing, I think we had a very foggy -- maybe  
25 two months -- you don't know what to do. And we



1 were always in the hopes that we would get a call,  
2 good news that we had a lead and that we knew  
3 somebody had done this to her, or "I know somebody  
4 who could have done this."

5 And there's that sense of, for my  
6 grandchildren, I cried many a night for them because  
7 I knew they were angry. At first they were shocked  
8 and they were angry and they were -- they were  
9 confused. And I still believe that they have those  
10 feelings, even though our baby has been gone for a  
11 number of years.

12 I wish at the time when you talk about  
13 protocols that the law enforcement had a packet for  
14 us to contact someone for counseling. And as a  
15 Native American mother, as a woman, it's hard for me  
16 to say I'm hurting and that I miss my niece. It's  
17 hard for us to say we need help because we always  
18 feel that going to a counselor or a social worker  
19 means something is wrong with us, that we're weak.  
20 So I wish that there was a packet they could have  
21 given to us and to the children to help them, even  
22 to this day.

23 Before we can start sharing, before we can  
24 start talking about the hurt that we lived and  
25 experienced, we must first get help, because we're

1 under a state of untrust, still. Who do we tell?

2 So we need that as part of this, that we  
3 need to offer them counseling, aside from going to  
4 talk and share our stories. Even though we're doing  
5 this today, there's still a lot of families being  
6 affected right now today, especially in border towns  
7 of our great reservations homeland.

8 So to the law enforcement -- and I know  
9 it's not their -- only their responsibility. But I  
10 wish that was something they had for us. "This is a  
11 card if you guys need help," just leave it with us.  
12 Because I still feel a lot of hurt. And it's inside  
13 me. And who -- like you said earlier, Secretary,  
14 who do you trust and who do you not trust?

15 That's it. Thank you.

16 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes. My name is Elena  
17 Giacci. (Native language spoken.)

18 I have been doing domestic sexual violence  
19 and sexual abuse work for about 30 years. And I  
20 think what's critical is, when working with the  
21 victims and survivors, that we don't just use their  
22 story, that we -- they're sacred stories. They talk  
23 about lives led and lives lost.

24 And so, for me, first protocol would be  
25 what are we going to do with this information that

1 we're collecting? How are we going to hold that in  
2 a good way? How are we going to utilize that?  
3 What's going to be done with it?

4 Also really informing victims and  
5 survivors about what it means to bring a story  
6 public. Because I'm certain that when -- they may  
7 not be expecting their pictures on the front page of  
8 Indian Country, or they may not expect their stories  
9 to be picked up by KOAT, they're just thinking it's  
10 a little story from a small town.

11 And the next thing you know, it's a  
12 national story. It talks about the very intimate  
13 details of somebody's relationship and how it can  
14 get pretty twisted in front of media. So just  
15 having them have the awareness of what that is and  
16 the treatment that is going to be done.

17 When listening to a story, it's critical  
18 to also know that when we look at so many of our  
19 women and men that are also survivors, how quickly  
20 you can be triggered yourself from listening to a  
21 story and not even recognize it; so really getting  
22 some training on understanding what it's like to  
23 collect a story, listen to a story in silence.

24 And like you were talking about, the  
25 vicarious trauma, I mean, that's huge when you're

1 starting to listen to the intimate details of the  
2 stories, but also really honoring what they're going  
3 to do. Because when I tell a story, I will expect  
4 someone to do something about that story and not for  
5 just to sit there with nothing being done.

6 So then it's, like, as part of the Task  
7 Force that is meeting here, what are they going to  
8 do? So where is my story going to go to next?  
9 Who's going to do something about it, and -- besides  
10 me allowing you to use a story? And how long are  
11 you going to use that story? Is that for ten years?  
12 Twenty years? The next twelve months? How long is  
13 that going to be?

14 I mean, I think some of those need to be  
15 answered with protocols that are pretty tight so we  
16 are not one of the people that are hurting our  
17 victims and survivors again. Because they've been  
18 hurt way too much by people that say that they're  
19 going to help and don't.

20 So I'm just saying we need to hold us to  
21 the highest standard when working with victims,  
22 survivors, their families, and their stories, to  
23 honor that at every step of the way.

24 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you so much for  
25 your comments. And I think you really highlight

1 something that I want to bring up, is that, you  
2 know, this is the first Task Force meeting. And so  
3 a lot of the input and things that we are  
4 discussing, especially just on how do we work with  
5 survivors while we're doing this work as a Task  
6 Force, is really going to shape and define what you  
7 said is those really clear protocols and response  
8 and how do we utilize them and how do we support  
9 those individuals.

10 And so this is really great input. And,  
11 hopefully, the next step will be to turn that input  
12 into something that we can really use to do  
13 meaningful work as a Task Force.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning. My name is  
15 Jolene Holgate. I am the coordinator for the  
16 Missing and Murdered Dine Relatives Working Group.  
17 And I am here with some of my group members.  
18 (Indian language spoken.)

19 And that's how I like to identify myself  
20 to my Navajo relatives here in the room.

21 Christine, thank you for sharing your  
22 story. Our group has worked with several families,  
23 and we continue to work directly with them. And I  
24 hope there's potential where we can provide that  
25 support and advocacy for you as well.

1           So I'm not going to take too much time.  
2           But in regards to the question, our working group  
3           started this work in March 2019. And just a couple  
4           of recommendations that we have in regards to  
5           sharing the stories.

6           As mentioned before, these stories are  
7           very sacred. The individuals that come to us for  
8           help, they're not just a number; they're not a data  
9           set. These are people; they're human; they have a  
10          spirit. And we have to honor and respect that when  
11          they give us those stories, when they choose to  
12          provide those stories.

13          So we were looking at it from the point of  
14          view where we want to respect their privacy. But we  
15          also understand that their information is incredibly  
16          important. So our team has members who are  
17          researchers, epidemiologists, individuals who are  
18          familiar with turning those types of subjective data  
19          into objective data.

20          So I would recommend probably someone in  
21          the realm of research or epidemiology who can turn  
22          those stories into some sort of coding system, so  
23          you're respecting that privacy, but you're also  
24          holding that information sacred to you.

25          That's one recommendation that we're also

1 working on but I would also provide to your Task  
2 Force.

3 In regards to the relationship with these  
4 families, I highly encourage that the Task Force  
5 also take trauma-informed training. The work we do  
6 must be victim-centered. We must ensure not only  
7 just their safety but their spirit provides.  
8 Because when they're telling these stories, they're  
9 being vulnerable with us. They are choosing to be  
10 vulnerable with you.

11 So when they do open up to you, it's  
12 important to come -- come with it, with a -- with  
13 good intentions and open heart, positivity, and just  
14 be there to support them.

15 And a lot of this I learned from my  
16 colleague here, Meskee Yatsayte, who works with the  
17 Navajo Nation Missing Persons Update. So we get a  
18 lot of training with her, too, as a volunteer  
19 advocate.

20 So those are two recommendations.

21 My third is also working with not just the  
22 families, but just some of the grassroots  
23 organizations that are out there. A lot of us have  
24 been engaged in this work for several years.

25 I don't like to refer to this MMIW as an

1 epidemic. It is an ongoing crisis. This is  
2 something that has been happening since the time of  
3 colonization, trafficking, perpetration against our  
4 women, against the land. So I think that's really  
5 important to also acknowledge. And I would  
6 encourage that.

7 We support this Task Force and truly  
8 appreciate Secretary Trujillo for being there with  
9 us since we started. And you were there at our  
10 first community forum. We held two community  
11 forums. We have a third one, which will be in  
12 Gallup on November 21st and 22nd. I encourage  
13 everyone to please come. If you have any other  
14 information or would like information, I can provide  
15 that to you. So (Indian language spoken.)

16 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. One more  
17 comment, and then we're going to move on, because a  
18 lot of what I'm hearing is being shared are things  
19 that we also want to ask -- keep essential questions  
20 to understand how we move forward.

21 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: And while you go get  
22 that other -- the other thing is, again, we have the  
23 stickies. So please jot down, or you can put it on  
24 the big Post-it notes for your suggestions. We also  
25 send any feedback to Samantha around anything that



1 we can be doing with the protocols specifically. We  
2 know that we won't be able to get to everybody, and  
3 we're going to be respectful and try to. But we  
4 have -- want to keep on moving forward. So thanks.

5 FROM THE FLOOR: (Indian language spoken.)  
6 I'm originally from Gallup. I just moved here two  
7 months ago. I've been doing sex and human  
8 trafficking work and also survivor trafficking.

9 To me, this advocacy here in Albuquerque,  
10 there's a lot of women who want help but who are not  
11 getting the help because they're biracial here.  
12 They don't understand what we're going through.

13 A lot of us are being turned away. Some  
14 of us have even attempted to go back and do the work  
15 that we were, even domestic violence, being raped.  
16 And some of it has to do with our relatives. And  
17 it's really hard.

18 I've been turned down by organizations  
19 already, and yet they don't want me on the Task  
20 Force because APD said they're trained, but yet they  
21 have never been through. So I ask the Task Force to  
22 keep an open mind, because some of the organization  
23 could retrigger the victims all over again, as it  
24 has done for me.

25 And that is really hurtful, because in a

1 way, it's like they don't want to hear or listen to  
2 what I have to say, but yet I want to help others  
3 getting out of it.

4 In violent Gallup there was a house that  
5 was trafficking three women that are homeless. I  
6 had to work with the PD there to get them out of  
7 there, but yet they're still being trafficked  
8 because they have nowhere to go.

9 A lot of these women are in homeless  
10 shelters, are in prison. There are some who are  
11 being scouts out there looking for women.

12 Right now there's a couple of women out  
13 there on the street who are -- who have permanent  
14 tattoos on their neck because they're being  
15 numbered -- they're being watched. Some of them are  
16 husbands. Some of them are -- you know, relatives.

17 Some of them are really close. They don't  
18 want to talk about it because it's hard to trust  
19 somebody.

20 I'm going to tell what I've been through.  
21 I signed up in the comment. And it's very hard for  
22 me doing this.

23 I found out through my research and I  
24 realized that I've been through trafficked. And  
25 it's very hard. I can't go to my family and talk

1 about it because I'm still scrutinized by my own  
2 family.

3 So through this, I want other women to get  
4 help, the right help, because it's not easy. And  
5 being called names, as -- you know, the "H" word,  
6 all this other stuff. It don't need to be brought  
7 up that way.

8 We need to really watch our children and  
9 educate them about all this stuff ahead of time,  
10 because us women are sacred, and we come from worth.  
11 We need to know how much we're worth. And that's  
12 where we need to teach our daughters at a young age,  
13 because they need to know. I was not taught that.  
14 But I just want to let you know that.

15 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you so much for  
16 sharing.

17 And I want to reiterate that we do have  
18 advocates in the back of the room that are here to  
19 work with anyone who needs to just talk to someone  
20 if they are triggered or feeling very emotional.

21 The Department, we also -- in planning  
22 this meeting, one thing we want to work towards to  
23 have at future meetings is maybe a resource table.  
24 So it sounds like there's a number of grassroots  
25 organizations represented here who will provide

1 resources and work with survivors.

2 So if you can please meet with someone  
3 from the Department before you leave so we can  
4 exchange information and get some resources from you  
5 all, whether it's just pamphlets or cards so that  
6 people know those resources are available and how to  
7 reach those -- reach them.

8 So this has been excellent feedback. And  
9 I can see the Department back here, who's writing on  
10 these boards, have realized that some of this input  
11 is also helping us to identify things that should be  
12 reflected in this final report that the Task Force  
13 is ultimately going to need to achieve.

14 And so I want to move forward to talk  
15 about what is the scope of the work of the Task  
16 Force and how do we -- how do we address this crisis  
17 with this report.

18 So aside from studying the crisis, we need  
19 to develop recommendations that are useful to  
20 communities, tribal governments, law enforcement  
21 agencies and state agencies.

22 So based on just some national data and  
23 media reports that have come out, one thing that we  
24 do know from the Urban Indian Health Institute  
25 report that came out last year is New Mexico had the

1 highest number of MMIWG cases out of 71 cities that  
2 were surveyed.

3 On a broader scale, a lot of us in here  
4 know and have experienced violence, personally, or  
5 we've been in close proximity to violence happening  
6 through a family member or just through our  
7 community. And we know that it is prevalent in  
8 Native American communities.

9 So based on the legislation that was  
10 written, the Department has identified these goals  
11 of the Task Force: Recommend how State can increase  
12 sources for reporting and identifying MMIW cases,  
13 collaborate with tribal law enforcement agencies to  
14 determine the scope of the problem, identify the  
15 barriers, along with what you all have said. You  
16 have highlighted some of those barriers. And then  
17 create partnerships to improve the reporting and  
18 investigation.

19 Work with tribal governments and  
20 communities to understand the problem and  
21 collaborate with DOJ, Department of Justice, to  
22 improve information sharing and coordination of  
23 resources, all right? Those valuable resources that  
24 we also know is the gap within our communities in  
25 order to address the violence, particularly the

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1 crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

2 I want to open it up to the Task Force.  
3 And it looks like, if we have some community input,  
4 I want to open it up to them as well.

5 What should be reflected in the final  
6 report? How do we translate these goals into the  
7 final report that we will need to put out?

8 Some of the things that I've heard already  
9 is, you know, survivor testimony. But how are we  
10 going to utilize that in a respectful and honorable  
11 way?

12 Barriers. What barriers do we need to  
13 highlight within that report? What are some general  
14 recommendations?

15 Task Force, you all come from a number of  
16 areas of expertise. What are you seeing in your  
17 respective fields that need to be highlighted in  
18 this report? Are there key terms and definitions  
19 that we need to identify?

20 And then data. What data are we going to  
21 be including in that report?

22 So I want to open it up. How do we make  
23 the work of this Task Force meaningful, and how do  
24 we make this report really mean something to our  
25 communities?

1           Go ahead and raise your hand if you have  
2 any ideas.

3           MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: So I just noticed,  
4 on the earlier picture of the circle with the outer  
5 circles, that community was not represented. So how  
6 do we make that more inclusive of community?

7           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other?

8           MS. CHRISTINE MEANS: I think all reports  
9 have to show where the holes, the gaps, the biases,  
10 the prejudices exist in the system. That's the only  
11 way that this is going to be fixed, because it's the  
12 system that enables everything; the survivors, the  
13 women who don't make it, their families, the  
14 barriers, the law enforcement. It's the whole  
15 system.

16           And the only way that it will change is if  
17 you highlight, you show, in bold print, where the  
18 system is falling short, not only falling short,  
19 outright denying support and services for the  
20 families and their victims.

21           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other Task Force  
22 members?

23           MS. BRENDA GONZALES: I think what I've  
24 seen as far as law enforcement is just law  
25 enforcement in general is changing our beings. And

1 we don't have many applicants, so we've been  
2 shorthanded.

3 And I think the focus is the officers are  
4 just handling calls. And we need to have people  
5 dedicated to actually doing investigations. And I  
6 don't mean just like one or two people, because it's  
7 just -- the caseload is just overwhelming. So more  
8 resources as far as law enforcement.

9 Thank you.

10 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm Jennifer Denetdale.  
11 I'm the Chair of the Navajo Human Rights Commission.

12 The Commission has been working with  
13 Council Delegate Amber Crotty's missing and murdered  
14 relatives.

15 As I'm sitting here today, I received a  
16 text message that in the last two years, just alone  
17 here in Albuquerque, we have -- I have the names of  
18 181 indigenous people who have died on the streets  
19 of Albuquerque that, again, go unsolved,  
20 unaddressed, unacknowledged as murdered indigenous  
21 people here in the streets of Albuquerque.

22 So I just want to mention that.

23 But I think that in terms of the scope of  
24 the report and the components of it, we also need to  
25 be willing to look at analysis that comes from



1 outside of established institutions, work that looks  
2 at -- we've met -- we've heard here stories about --  
3 and I know of them well, I'm a researcher, I'm a  
4 professor of American Studies, I'm a historian --  
5 that we know well what places border towns are and  
6 urban spaces are for Dine.

7 And we've heard Gallup mentioned several  
8 times. Gallup is a place of incredible and extreme  
9 violence for indigenous and Dine people. And so we  
10 need to develop an analysis of what these border  
11 towns are like and how these border town economies  
12 are created. Because they are -- they sustain  
13 themselves on the resources of indigenous people,  
14 including our lives and our women and our LGBTQ  
15 people.

16 And so in talking about this, then, I  
17 think we also need to develop analysis that is  
18 outside of established interpretations. We need to  
19 look for other places for analysis.

20 I appreciate the question back here -- or  
21 this point here -- about what are we going to do  
22 with these stories, okay? What are we going to do  
23 with these stories in this country? And have  
24 indigenous nations also offered inquests into these  
25 murders and deaths and demand an inquest, for

1 example, in a place like Gallup, New Mexico?

2 We need to do -- if you develop a mass  
3 amount of documents and a mass amount of evidence,  
4 that provides you with spaces and places and  
5 directions to demand action.

6 And I'm not just talking about actions in  
7 terms of established institutions, because law  
8 enforcement has failed miserably. We know that as  
9 indigenous people and as Dine.

10 So the other point that I want to make in  
11 terms of just the daily work of grinding this as I  
12 have, as a researcher, there was a point made in  
13 some of the work that on the Navajo Nation, for  
14 example, victims and the families of victims know  
15 who did it. It's usually a relative. It's usually  
16 someone close.

17 So at a community level, we also have to  
18 develop accountability and responsibility. Because  
19 there's such an incredible amount of silence that is  
20 about family, that is about clan, relationships, and  
21 about -- and it shouldn't be about keeping silent.

22 So those are just a couple of things I  
23 want to mention. I want to thank the Honorable  
24 Amber Crotty for putting this on the table. Thank  
25 you and all the people who do this work on the

1 ground and who should be acknowledged.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. Please,  
4 if you have comments at this point, raise your hand.  
5 And it's also open to the Task Force as well.  
6 Please raise your hands, and I will come and get  
7 you.

8 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I also want to raise  
9 whether or not, as a Task Force, we need to think  
10 about key terms and definitions and purpose from a  
11 number of individuals, that while the Task Force is  
12 "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women," that we  
13 shouldn't assume that because someone is missing  
14 that they're murdered as well.

15 And so I think that there's maybe  
16 opportunity for us to kind of look at that and  
17 better understand that so that we don't contribute  
18 to a misclassification or more misinformation or  
19 create that.

20 So I just want us to be mindful about that  
21 and have some of those discussions moving forward,  
22 to not make assumptions, that we're all using the  
23 same vocabulary and same understanding.

24 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: I've got some  
25 comments back here.

1 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. My name  
2 is Delilah Tenorio. I'm sorry. I've been sitting  
3 back here because I have a cough.

4 So in terms of answering the question  
5 about how do you incorporate the stories of  
6 survivors into the final report, what I would -- and  
7 I do want to say that I support the idea of the  
8 committ- -- or the Task Force having some kind of  
9 trauma-informed training in how they speak with  
10 survivors and how they get them to engage, because I  
11 think that it's very important to have that skill  
12 set when you're dealing with these stories, not only  
13 because it's important to -- to the Task Force to  
14 gather this information, but it's important to the  
15 survivor that you actually hear what they're telling  
16 you.

17 Because if they don't feel like they're --  
18 you're hearing what they're saying, they're not  
19 going to want to share any of that information with  
20 you.

21 And I come from the experience of one not  
22 only being an advocate, but also representing  
23 survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in  
24 both tribal courts and state court systems, but also  
25 in being a community member and learning the value

1 of what it means to be listened to.

2 So in terms of listening to these stories  
3 and being able to use them to provide information in  
4 the final report, these stories are not only  
5 important because they're survivors' words, but  
6 they're also important because they're going to be  
7 the bulk of where you gather your information from.

8 These survivors are going to be talking  
9 about the barriers that they've experienced.  
10 They're going to be talking about recommendations  
11 that they have in order to get rid of some of these  
12 barriers. And they're going to be -- be able to  
13 give you some of the most valuable -- I think some  
14 of the most valuable research that you're not going  
15 to be able to find in other reports because you're  
16 actually able to talk to somebody and get firsthand  
17 information about what they went through and what  
18 they're experiencing.

19 And I think that, again, you know,  
20 trauma-informed is definitely something I would  
21 support for the Task Force, learning how to engage  
22 with survivors, developing your listening skills,  
23 learning how to sometimes just sit back and let the  
24 survivors tell their story the first time, and then  
25 going in and engaging and saying -- for example, as

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349



MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com

1 an attorney, one of the things I would say is, you  
2 know, "I understand you're here because you want to  
3 do this. But I'm going to let you talk first and  
4 then I'm going to have questions specific to  
5 whatever it is. And if you have questions for me,  
6 we'll -- we'll" -- you know, move on like that.

7 But providing that outline and that  
8 structure, I mean, builds that relationship and that  
9 trust.

10 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. Make my  
11 way around the room.

12 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)

13 I am a Kiowa Apache from Oklahoma. I do  
14 stand-up comedy for a living. So this is very  
15 different for me to talk in this capacity.

16 But I think, of course, we've talked a lot  
17 about the system. But in answering the question of  
18 what to do with this report, what your goals are,  
19 where you want it to go, what impact will it have on  
20 this issue, it's such a big issue that it crosses  
21 all borders.

22 It crosses every -- I mean, it affects  
23 every indigenous community across this country in  
24 South America and North America. We're ultimately  
25 devalued and ultimately invisible. And that's why

1 it's this -- I mean, you look, and there's a reason  
2 why there's not massive mainstream news in here.  
3 We're invisible.

4           They just published a study, the  
5 Illuminators organization. You can look it up. 70  
6 to 80 percent of American people doesn't even know  
7 Native people exist. So when you take that in, it  
8 becomes this bigger issue of what do you do with  
9 this information when you're growing up a -- you're  
10 growing up in a society that thinks we went extinct,  
11 we don't even exist.

12           So how do they know we're suffering? They  
13 think we're already dead. So that is step one. How  
14 do we convince the American people that we're still  
15 here. And to value us as human beings. They put  
16 every power plant and every destructive thing right  
17 on top of our homes. So how do we convince people  
18 that we're human beings, we deserve clean air, clean  
19 water? We deserve to not be killed? So that's step  
20 one.

21           And a lot of that has to do with media  
22 representation. I have a degree in mass  
23 communications, and there's a reason I went into  
24 media, not just to, like, "Oh, I'm cool, look at me  
25 everybody." It wasn't an intention. I never wanted

1 any of that.

2 What I really wanted was just to show the  
3 world that indigenous people do exist and that we're  
4 not dying and we're not all, you know, sad all the  
5 time, that we laugh, we're humans, just to humanize  
6 us. That was it.

7 So my goal for you guys with this  
8 statement, what I just said, is just so that you  
9 guys can see the bigger picture and help Americans,  
10 average Americans, see us as human beings.

11 And that might sound like the simplest  
12 request. But a lot of that has to do with  
13 destigmatizing, you know, our communities.

14 So, thank you. (Native language spoken.)

15 FROM THE FLOOR: I'd like to say hello.  
16 My name is Norman Patrick Brown. I come from  
17 Chinle, Navajo Nation. (Native language spoken.)

18 Sometimes many of us feel things that  
19 others can't. When I came into this room, it was  
20 heartbreaking. Before anybody ever spoke. I'm a  
21 filmmaker. And I don't want to talk about myself.  
22 But I'm also a victim of domestic violence. The  
23 question, what recommendations.

24 I think what's critical -- as my sister  
25 from Tewa United said, is our greatest strength is



1 our cultural values and ideals. Coming from a  
2 matriarchal society, I was raised by grandparents,  
3 grandmas, aunties, my older sisters. And I was  
4 never hit; I was never slapped; I was never jerked;  
5 I was never yelled at; I was never put down.

6 So when that happened to me, I was, like,  
7 wow, I was never treated that way before. But I  
8 just want to share that.

9 But I think what's critical is having a  
10 web series showing those cultural strengths. A lot  
11 of our men need to be educated about the value of  
12 our women. A lot of our young men need to be shown.

13 The greatest teaching my mom told me, she  
14 said, "Sonny, every woman is a mother to all.  
15 Always remember that. Watch what you say. Watch  
16 how you act. Watch what you think -- how you think  
17 and how you speak."

18 I said, "Why, Mom?"

19 "Because you represent me."

20 That was the greatest hardest teaching to  
21 live is to that value is representing her in how I  
22 walk daily.

23 Many of us are not perfect. But we can  
24 become that tool for each other.

25 And I'd just like to acknowledge, a lot of

1 our men -- you know, it's tough growing up, even  
2 myself. I'm not making excuses for the men, mind  
3 you. But we have to offer some form of forgiveness  
4 for each other.

5 The greatest value that we have is our  
6 cultural values. How do we initiate that education  
7 to our young men, to our women, you know? And I was  
8 thinking all the questions about, yes, stories are  
9 sacred.

10 Within our society, my society, Dine  
11 society, our ceremonies are stories. Our characters  
12 are antagonists and protagonists. We have -- we  
13 have plot points, you know.

14 So right now, across the Dine Navajo  
15 Nation, our elders are sharing stories, about moral  
16 values and ethics of how to live a good life to our  
17 kids.

18 I think that each tribe that we have here,  
19 we all remember grandma. And that's the greatest  
20 thing I always value. "Oh, my sonny boy, you're the  
21 most precious thing in this universe. I love you no  
22 matter what."

23 That was almost a daily thing my mom said.  
24 (Native language spoken.)

25 When I did something wrong, "Come here,

1 son. Sit down." Sit there, and it's, "Oh, god, I  
2 got kicked out of school."

3 She goes, "You know that was wrong;  
4 right?"

5 I said, "Yeah, Mom."

6 "Don't do it again."

7 Just like that. (Native language spoken.)

8 "Don't do that." Never got kicked out."

9 So I think that these stories can heal our  
10 people. Let's look at the positiveness of our  
11 teachings. Let's look at the beauty of what our  
12 women are. Grandma says, "The first thing you say  
13 is "(Native language spoken), son."

14 That's the first thing we say when we  
15 pray. "Mother Earth."

16 You know, we have (Native language  
17 spoken.) You know, Mother Water, Mother Fire,  
18 Mother Mountains, Mother Rainbow, Mother Rain.

19 You know, these teachings need to be  
20 initiated again for whatever tribe that we are or  
21 what we have. To me, how do we initiate these  
22 teachings? There's probably, what, 50 of us, 60 of  
23 us here. A web series can initiate tens of  
24 thousands. One little teaching can change a  
25 person's life.

1           The one that helped change and structured  
2 my life the best I could was what mom said. "You  
3 represent me, son. Always remember that. Wherever  
4 you -- watch how you sit. Watch how you eat. Don't  
5 be angry all the time. Don't be too, you know,  
6 laughing all -- be in balance. That's what I want  
7 you to represent me."

8           So I would encourage the Task Force to  
9 look at how can we reach the tens of thousands of  
10 our men, our women, our families. And the greatest  
11 tool that we have that we all know is the  
12 technology. Let's initiate that technology to heal  
13 our people with our values and with our stories.

14           And one other thing, too, is like, again,  
15 my sister from Tewa United, she said that the  
16 community was not in that circle.

17           It's great that we have tribal  
18 representatives. But as you know, many within our  
19 tribes and our nations, it's very, very political.  
20 And that must not be involved in our healing. The  
21 political process does not heal us; it divides us.

22           So in that -- with that being said, I  
23 would ask that the grassroots people, the people  
24 that are actually in the trenches be one of the  
25 major voices in this, and having workshops within

1 these web series of our elders, of our men, of our  
2 women, talking about how we used to be and how we  
3 can be and how we -- who we can become again, of who  
4 we are and who we were.

5 Now (Native language spoken.) One last  
6 thing. My dad says -- "Son" -- he's a Navajo Code  
7 Talker -- "You are not a Navajo." I was 13, 14  
8 years old. "You are not an American."

9 And I was sitting there with this concept  
10 of Navajo was too deep for me.

11 I said, "I don't understand."

12 My dad, he goes, "You're a (Native  
13 language spoken). You're a holy earth surface being.  
14 Now you must act like one."

15 So these teachings are lost. We must  
16 embrace them. As we know, we've been here. We've  
17 survived. I'm not here to preach to you. I'm not  
18 here to tell you. I just want to share with you the  
19 strength of we've survived genocide. We're still  
20 here because of our way of life. That should be the  
21 foundation of this mov- -- of our -- our effort to  
22 communicate, our effort to educate.

23 We must educate our young women, our young  
24 men, our young -- our parents -- young parents about  
25 the values of who we are. One little sentence can

1 change a life.

2 And I just wanted to say that. And for  
3 all my sisters, my mother, my aunties, my daughter  
4 is here, be strong. Thank you for taking care of  
5 us. Thank you for cooking for us. Thank you for  
6 holding us, hugging us and forgiving us.

7 So all of you, I value all of you. And  
8 just coming in here really made me feel happy. And  
9 just hearing the stories, it's heartbreaking, very  
10 heartbreaking.

11 Especially Gallup. Many of us have stood  
12 against Gallup most of our lives. And Gallup is a  
13 prime example.

14 So with that being said, I'm very thankful  
15 to be here and the hard work. Michelle Grisham,  
16 thank you very much for initiating this, and her  
17 staff. Thank you.

18 (Applause).

19 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you for your  
20 comments and your input and sharing yourself in this  
21 space. I want to reiterate again that we have the  
22 sticky notes. Some of us may not want to stand up  
23 and voice our input at this time. So -- but we want  
24 to hear from you. So if there is something you want  
25 to share but you just don't want to speak, write it

1 down and hand it to one of the Department staff that  
2 you see here today.

3 Also, this is the discussion portion. So  
4 we do have -- we have about until 4- -- 4:40.  
5 That's when we want to kind of wrap up. So just be  
6 mindful of the time that we have left. And this is  
7 just the beginning of the conversations, okay?

8 The other thing I want to pinpoint as  
9 we -- as you all share your ideas about what should  
10 be reflected in the report, this Task Force has less  
11 than a year to write this report. So be very  
12 mindful and strategic about how we utilize this time  
13 frame and this report to keep awareness going, to  
14 keep our Legislature -- to motivate them to keep  
15 this work going, because we can't do it all in less  
16 than a year. That is for sure.

17 So we need to be strategic about how we  
18 put this report together so that way we can continue  
19 this work to address this crisis.

20 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)

21 My name is Jose Villegas. I'm with the  
22 Texas Band of Yaqui Indians. I'm here on behalf of  
23 this beautiful tribe to support our brothers and  
24 sisters here in New Mexico.

25 I do have, on the scope of the report,

1 some suggestions. Within the language of the House  
2 bill 278, in Sections 1, in paragraph E and F, this  
3 Task Force, it would be -- it would be right on if  
4 the Task Force would adopt to create a law  
5 enforcement coordinating committee between the law  
6 enforcement community and the federal officials.  
7 The goal of this particular idea is for the local  
8 tribal state law enforcement communities, when  
9 they're talking to the feds, like the FBI, the U.S.  
10 Attorney's Office, the BIA, so forth and so on,  
11 there's two objectives.

12 One would be to address the IT issues, the  
13 coordination part of that, information gathering,  
14 dissemination of database systems relating to the  
15 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women issue, big  
16 time.

17 And I am willing to support our New Mexico  
18 State Police, the local level and the state level,  
19 in creating this -- this committee, and making it  
20 work. And this will complement the existing State  
21 Tribal Collaboration Act that was passed in 2009.  
22 And I'm willing to make that happen with my brothers  
23 and sisters in law enforcement. Thank you. Muchas  
24 grácias. (Native language spoken.)

25 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you.



1 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. My name  
2 is Pamilya Herndon, and I have been an advocate for  
3 women's issues for a number of years.

4 And there are three things that I would  
5 like to bring forth for the Task Force to remember  
6 to put into their -- the scope of the report,  
7 particularly with recommendations.

8 As I listen to the story regarding  
9 Ms. Dione Ray Begay and the fact that there had been  
10 attempts to go to the District Attorney to get  
11 prosecution moving forward and that there wasn't  
12 one, what I do want to bring forward to the group  
13 and to the recommendation is that a Western way is  
14 that if a person doesn't do the job for which they  
15 were elected, then how do we mobilize to vote them  
16 out?

17 I don't know that District Attorney has  
18 been there since -- the one that was there in 2015  
19 is still there today. But I do want to talk about  
20 the ability to mobilize communities. And it doesn't  
21 have anything to do with politics, but it has to do  
22 with supporting the well-being of our communities.

23 So, in this case, I am suggesting that one  
24 of the recommendations is for communities to  
25 mobilize and to move individuals out of public

1 office who are not supporting issues that will  
2 support the communities that need to be addressed.

3 The McKinley County Health Alliance is an  
4 organization still existing down in Gallup for a  
5 while. And one of the -- one of the items that has  
6 grown out of that group is something called an  
7 Indigenous Women's Resource Center.

8 Throughout the United States in any state  
9 where there's at least 10 percent Native American  
10 population, there can be this Indigenous Women's  
11 Resource Center to help lift Native women up. So  
12 it's important to have these conversations with our  
13 federal and state legislators to make sure that  
14 there is money that's set aside to create those  
15 centers. And it does exist at the federal level.  
16 But we have to demand it.

17 And then the third and final item is the  
18 Gallup shelter just closed, the only one that's  
19 there. So I am saying to the Secretary and to the  
20 members of the Governor's Task Force -- or the  
21 Governor herself -- we have got to make sure that  
22 there is funding that's put back in the Gallup area  
23 for a Gallup shelter. Because if one needs to leave  
24 a place that is violent, they need to have somewhere  
25 to go that's a safe place.

1           So the funding for that shelter, or  
2 shelters similar to that, must be put back in place.

3           So those are the three recommendations:  
4 support the Indigenous Women's Resource Center,  
5 support making sure there's a shelter where women  
6 can leave their abuser, and, third, and most  
7 important, vote people out of office who are not  
8 supporting the community.

9           (Applause.)

10           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. Let us  
11 know where we're at. I want to spend maybe about  
12 10, 15 more minutes on the scope of the report, and  
13 then we'll move on to some other key questions that  
14 we want to hear input on.

15           But, again, what we share today -- this is  
16 just the beginning of the conversation, and this is  
17 really going to help the Task Force and the  
18 Department put together a report that is impactful  
19 and meaningful. So share your ideas. Write them  
20 down. Raise your hand.

21           FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah. My name is Fred  
22 Youngbear. I'm the Bear Clan out of Meskawki  
23 Nation, live down here in Santa Fe for a number of  
24 years. And I just want to make a couple of points  
25 here.

1 With regards to the title, Missing and  
2 Murdered Indigenous Women, you know, there is a  
3 difference between being missing and a murder  
4 victim. Where do the stories go? Well, that  
5 depends on which category this particular person  
6 falls into.

7 If it's a missing person, it's been my  
8 experience that law enforcement has no involvement  
9 with a missing person. It's only when that person  
10 becomes a criminal liability case does law  
11 enforcement become involved.

12 And so where does that story go when you  
13 go to a law enforcement person? What they're  
14 looking for is evidence. There must be a venue  
15 where I believe people can go with regards to a  
16 missing person. And if that missing person is  
17 missing voluntarily, that has to also be  
18 established. They may not want to go home for one  
19 reason or another.

20 These are areas that I think should be  
21 explored, an area of Missing and Murdered Indigenous  
22 Women and people.

23 Also I picked up a little bit of  
24 frustration from Brenda Gonzales with regards to  
25 being shorthanded. I think the Task Force needs to

1 look at the possibility of getting a pool from out  
2 of the communities that are able to go out into the  
3 communities and question or interview family members  
4 in that particular area.

5 Sometimes family members will talk to  
6 people that are not law enforcement, and they are  
7 easily able to give you more information when it is  
8 a missing person's case as opposed to a criminal  
9 matter. And sometimes family members out in the  
10 communities don't appreciate or understand the  
11 difference between being missing and having a murder  
12 victim in their family situation.

13 So I just wanted to bring those two points  
14 up, that there is a difference between being missing  
15 and being murdered. There's different criteria for  
16 that. Thanks a lot.

17 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you for your  
18 comments.

19 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you. My name is  
20 Lauren Bernally. I'm a policy analyst for the  
21 Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission. (Native  
22 language spoken.)

23 I wanted to talk a little bit about human  
24 rights, which I think is really important in the  
25 recommendations and should be part of the preamble.

1 As indigenous people, we have specific rights that  
2 are -- that are our rights, that are grounded in our  
3 human rights. They're immutable.

4 And with Navajo, in particular, we  
5 published -- Dr. Denetdale and I worked on a report  
6 called "Status of Navajo Women and Gender Violence."  
7 And through that report, a number of the issues that  
8 had come out, we recognized early on about three  
9 years ago when this report was published. And it's  
10 really good to see this happening now.

11 But critical to human rights is that when  
12 we examine the status of Navajo women, we realize  
13 that there had been a shifting of how colonization  
14 had removed Navajo women from a position of respect  
15 and authority.

16 Traditionally, women, Navajo women, were  
17 really leaders in traditional Navajo society. We  
18 were the runners; we were the ones that made the  
19 decisions. We were at the table with our men.  
20 Jointly, we made decisions together. And we saw  
21 this relationship erode as time went through.

22 It is really important that in this report  
23 that we articulate how our culture, on how our  
24 traditions emulate or implore how women were  
25 respected in our societies.

1           For us, when you think about the Blessing  
2 Way, the Navajo ceremonies -- there were 12 Navajo  
3 female deities that are very important in our  
4 ceremonies. Not -- there are some male deities, but  
5 the female deities in our traditional narratives are  
6 the most significant. (Native language spoken.)

7           Changing Woman. Very important when we go  
8 through that puberty stage. And our  
9 responsibilities as Navajo women to continue to give  
10 birth to our children. We are the ones that  
11 perpetuate our Navajo society. That's really  
12 important, and that is contained in our ceremonies,  
13 in our songs that go back since time immemorial.  
14 And that is what we need to educate our people that  
15 we're working with, the lawyers, the police  
16 officers, the teachers, everyone that we interact  
17 with.

18           That's all I wanted to say.

19           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you.

20           FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is  
21 [inaudible]. I think a lot of people have touched  
22 on it today about it happening within our  
23 communities from our relatives. And I think that's  
24 something that does [inaudible] as well, is there  
25 does need to be a discussion about, you know, how it

1 happens at home and how men treat women in the  
2 community as well.

3 A lot of times, you know, women aren't  
4 necessarily or don't feel humanized. And I think  
5 that is something that, you know, it is hard to  
6 [inaudible] society.

7 But as a community, as a pueblo, as a  
8 tribe, it is easier to confront on a smaller scale.  
9 So much gets brushed under the rug every day with  
10 the families within rooms and within -- you know, on  
11 holidays, that I think we do need resources within  
12 our tribes.

13 And, hopefully, this is something that the  
14 Task Force can provide is something that the men and  
15 the community members can go to and learn about  
16 these issues.

17 And, you know, I think, also knowing that,  
18 you know, every community is different. And I think  
19 a lot of the work -- you know, it is higher level.  
20 But there does need to be on-the-ground movement as  
21 well, because it doesn't -- these things don't occur  
22 in these rooms. They occur where we can't see them,  
23 so, actually, going on the ground and having those  
24 resources and being adapted to what's going on.

25 So I think that's just my main point is



1 I'd really like to see that there's something framed  
2 within our own communities, having statistics,  
3 having something where these tribes can go to and  
4 learn about it with having these resources where  
5 they might not feel comfortable about doing that at  
6 home; also, having a place to go to and have  
7 somewhere to heal. So I think that would be a  
8 really great addition to this as well.

9 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. So I'm  
10 going to get one more comment from the community  
11 members that are here today and close off. We need  
12 final comments from the Task Force. We need to move  
13 on. But there will be opportunities for you all to  
14 share your input.

15 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)

16 Hello, everybody. My name is Meskee  
17 Yatsayte. I'm with the Navajo Nation's Missing  
18 Persons, also the missing persons of the 21 pueblos  
19 and missing and murdered indigenous relatives.  
20 There was three things that I wanted to kind of  
21 touch base on, most kind of just like  
22 recommendations.

23 And, right here, if you can see, these are  
24 our current missing Dine relatives on and off the  
25 reservation right now. And there's more. But right

1 now, these are the ones that we can actually contact  
2 the family or get information on the NamUs database.

3 So the first recommendation I had was we  
4 need to bring a little bit more awareness of first  
5 response strategies for our elderly relatives with  
6 Alzheimer's and dementia. Those relatives are  
7 usually forgotten about. And when this comes into  
8 play, a lot of people don't know what to do, what to  
9 look for.

10 And this also includes our relatives with  
11 disabilities. We have so many of our, you know,  
12 elderly relatives and our relatives with  
13 disabilities that are left out of these talks. And  
14 they need to be included. This is something I  
15 really want to stress.

16 Also, this question comes from a lot of  
17 the families that I work with. So this question I  
18 kind of want to ask to the Task Force is will the  
19 New Mexico MMIW Task Force include all genders?  
20 This is including men, women, boys, girls, our LGBTQ  
21 relatives? Because without all of their genders  
22 being included, what really good is this, this data  
23 collection and this database that you guys are  
24 working on? Because they -- and I mean "they" like  
25 boys, men, and our LGBTQ -- should have been

1 included at the beginning.

2 So if you're going to not include them,  
3 what can you tell me that I can tell these families,  
4 hundreds of families, even thousands of families?  
5 What would be your message to all these hundreds of  
6 families having a missing and murdered father, son,  
7 uncle, brother, or an LGBTQ spirited relative, what  
8 would you tell them if you're not going to include  
9 any of their relatives?

10 Because this is not just a crisis with our  
11 women and our girls. The more research that we do,  
12 there's more men that are missing or murdered than  
13 there is women. But a lot of people are not talking  
14 about that. So that's one thing I wanted to know,  
15 if -- are you guys going to include all genders.

16 And working with a lot of these families,  
17 one thing you really need to be mindful on is not to  
18 make promises that you're not going to keep. Do not  
19 do that, because you are going to cause more trauma  
20 to them.

21 So these are kind of the recommendations I  
22 wanted to -- to bring up to the Task Force. And  
23 just to remind you guys that the family with a  
24 missing or murdered husband, son, uncle, father,  
25 they are waiting for an answer. We cannot leave

1     them out.  Yes, us women, we are sacred, and all of  
2     us know that we do have sons; we have uncles.  So we  
3     all need to speak up for them.

4             And I just want to thank everybody for  
5     being here and allowing me to speak.  And I want to  
6     thank the Task Force.  And I hope that our  
7     representative from the Navajo Nation comes to our  
8     forums and sits down and does talk with our families  
9     and get to know what's really going on.

10            But please be prepared, because this is  
11     something that is not -- you don't take this  
12     lightly.  This is something that will be with you.  
13     And remember that these families are counting on  
14     each and every one of you sitting at the table  
15     today.  Thank you.  (Native language spoken.)

16            (Applause.)

17            MS. SAMANTHA WAULS:  Thank you.

18            Any final comments from the Task Force  
19     before we move on?

20            SECRETARY TRUJILLO:  I want to thank you  
21     for your questions and comments, everybody.  I think  
22     that with respect to your question, that's something  
23     for us to consider, for us to talk about.  The  
24     legislation that created the Task Force was pretty  
25     specific.

1           That doesn't mean that we can't have the  
2 discussion and make sure that we do all that we can  
3 to address the crisis that's the larger landscape  
4 and not miss an opportunity like you're talking  
5 about. So I really want to thank you for asking  
6 that question to us to talk about and discuss.

7           I agree with you. It's not just limited  
8 to our women and girls, that it includes all  
9 genders. And if we're going to begin healing, that  
10 means healing for everybody.

11           So I want to thank you, and I hope that as  
12 a Task Force, we will be discussing this. And I  
13 just want to open it up to anybody else to reflect.  
14 I also want to thank the audience for sharing your  
15 feedback and your thoughts. It really helps us in  
16 moving forward as a Task Force to hear from all of  
17 you about the work that we have ahead of us, but  
18 also in a meaningful way.

19           And for me, personally, I don't take this  
20 lightly. And I -- because this has to -- these are  
21 people that we're talking about.

22           So I just want you to know that, and we're  
23 going to need people like you to help us and to  
24 guide us.

25           I don't know if anybody else in the Task

1 Force -- but thank you for that question. Thank  
2 you.

3 Anyone else on the Task Force? In  
4 relation to the feedback that was heard; right?

5 MR. MATTHEW STRAND: I can tell it seems  
6 like there's been a common theme of accountability,  
7 especially among the DAs in this state. I do know  
8 it seems like, with DWIs, you can go on Google and  
9 every county in the state, you can find dismissal  
10 rates and dismissals.

11 I don't think that exists for DV. And if  
12 that information, you could Google, it would be  
13 publicly available. It would be information the  
14 public could use to hold elected officials  
15 accountable and to find out where holes are in the  
16 system in certain parts of the state.

17 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you, Matthew.  
18 I don't know if you heard him in the back. I raised  
19 a point about how in the current system, right, if  
20 someone's convicted of DWI, there is, like, a  
21 database and a picture and -- but that doesn't exist  
22 for domestic violence; right?

23 MR. MATTHEW STRAND: In terms of  
24 conviction rates.

25 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Conviction rates?

1 Yeah. So just --

2 MR. MATTHEW STRAND: Per county.

3 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: So just another way  
4 of shining a light, right, in terms of  
5 accountability. I don't know if you heard in the  
6 back. You had something?

7 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: Just want to thank  
8 you, everybody, for your comments, and a lot to  
9 think about and take in. I also am open to being  
10 more inclusive in language in the title. But,  
11 again, I'm not sure what the -- because this is  
12 State resources that are being provided, I hope that  
13 that's possible. And I think because it's the Task  
14 Force and we have a lot of leadership, we can do  
15 what we want; right?

16 And then also I have a lot of concerns  
17 right now about the missing children in detention  
18 facilities in the camps, in the human camps, and how  
19 are we -- I guess the -- another goal would be that  
20 refugee populations are included, and that it is our  
21 own state systems that are enacting the missing  
22 people, the missing children. So I hope we can find  
23 ways to be inclusive of them.

24 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I just want to say,  
25 in relation to that, I think that, well, again, that

1 the legislation-created Task Force, that we have the  
2 ability, based upon what we're hearing, to be  
3 flexible, and, really, the responsibility to address  
4 it holistically.

5 And so maybe part of what we're embarking  
6 on as well is trying to find out where -- you know,  
7 what is called for under the legislation, but then  
8 also be mindful of those areas that weren't  
9 considered as a part of the legislation so we don't  
10 lose sight of these -- the larger picture.

11 And while maybe our time is limited as a  
12 Task Force with respect to the report that we have  
13 to -- that we're going to be putting together, that  
14 we don't forget the totality of everything.

15 So to know that there may be more support  
16 maybe from our legislature to get another  
17 appropriation to do more. Because as a Task Force  
18 member, I will tell you that I don't think that  
19 having a report issued by November of 2020 is going  
20 to capture everything that many of you have been  
21 working on for years and years and years. So I  
22 think that we also need to maintain perspective when  
23 it comes to the work that we have in front of us as  
24 well.

25 So we do have -- we can be mindful about



1 it in that way.

2 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: I just think,  
3 being that it's -- that some of these camps are  
4 specific to our state, and this is a state task  
5 force, that we can have a lot of impact when it  
6 comes to abolishing these facilities.

7 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I agree.

8 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: When they're  
9 identified in our control and direct power, you  
10 know. It's something concrete that's not a mystery.

11 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Okay. I want to move  
12 on to talk about -- first of all, I want to thank  
13 everyone for their comments and feedback. And I  
14 also want to commend everyone in this room who  
15 shared their input and stories that you all have  
16 been very respectful and honorable towards each  
17 other throughout the conversation so far. So I just  
18 want to commend everyone and recognize that and  
19 let's just continue to keep up this spirit in this  
20 room.

21 Okay. So understanding this ongoing  
22 crisis is going to be a barrier within itself.  
23 Because as a lot of us know, recent reports have  
24 come out to identify that before you can even really  
25 paint the picture of this problem, we first have to

1 address that there is a data crisis; right? There  
2 is under-recording, there's gaps, there's  
3 misreporting or misidentification happening within  
4 law enforcement.

5 So I want to take the time to really talk  
6 about how can we strategically tap into resources  
7 that that could help paint the picture of what is  
8 happening within our state. Beyond just law  
9 enforcement data that we know is probably going to  
10 be limited and survivor testimony, what are other  
11 resources or data sources that we can be tapping  
12 into to understand the totality of this crisis? And  
13 are there any upcoming related events that the Task  
14 Force should be attending to also understand what is  
15 happening?

16 So I want to open it up to the Task Force  
17 members, if you have any input here.

18 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: So from the law  
19 enforcement perspective on the -- talking about the  
20 data, one of the things that just opened this  
21 research and starting to look at it was we have two  
22 things, like State Police, DPS, we use N.C.I.C., to  
23 enter people missing. And I didn't realize until a  
24 few months ago that there's a whole other system  
25 called NamUs, that a majority of Native nations and

1 tribes and pueblos and a lot of people use.

2 And so we started working with NamUs,  
3 trying to figure out how we can close that gap.  
4 They are working with us for the data-sharing; but  
5 there's a number of people that are in that system,  
6 NamUs New Mexico. If you go in there right now,  
7 New Mexico has 145 cases. But those are 145 cases  
8 that we can't see, State Police and vice versa.

9 So number one is going to be your data  
10 sharing, how do we close those gaps, how do we work  
11 with BIA, FBI, and all of these, to, you know, share  
12 that data. Because there's a common theme. And the  
13 common theme is going to be everything's happening  
14 on the tribe -- it's happening on the reservation.  
15 So you have that exclusive jurisdiction, or you have  
16 all these cases we talked about where they're coming  
17 off the reservation, and they're coming out into  
18 Albuquerque; they're coming into Gallup; they're  
19 going to Grants, Farmington, wherever it is. So  
20 they're not being reported correctly.

21 And like was talked about earlier, you  
22 have cases where they go missing and they don't want  
23 to be found, you know. So a lot of this has to be  
24 updated with the -- with the report, the reporting  
25 and the data field, you know, getting down to some

1 of these fields in N.C.I.C. or NamUs, where they are  
2 very descriptive about, you know, was the missing  
3 person last seen on tribal land? Are they a tribal  
4 member? Where is their primary residence?

5 Some of these basic things should be in  
6 N.C.I.C. and NamUs. What tribe are they affiliated  
7 with, and their family members, this, that and the  
8 other. When some of these things aren't in  
9 N.C.I.C., when a Native American is entered as  
10 missing and the tribe is looking into it, and let's  
11 say, for example, that it goes off the reservation  
12 so we step in to help, there's no link back.

13 And so we're left, as far as going as far  
14 back as they lived at 123 Whatever Street in Gallup,  
15 you know. And that's kind of where the trail stops.

16 So we have to figure out, with that data  
17 sharing, how we're going to incorporate it. One of  
18 the biggest problems that we face as State Police is  
19 all the tribes have different reporting systems.  
20 They don't have like, let's say, for example, CJIS.  
21 And so you have -- some tribes would have SLOOP  
22 [ph], or some tribes would have all these different  
23 reporting systems. And so they're working with what  
24 they have.

25 So their systems are reporting, are -- you

1 know, in the 80s, in the 90s. You have social  
2 services and domestic violence advocates for some of  
3 these pueblos that don't even have databases in the  
4 computer. Everything is handwritten still and they  
5 throw it in a box or throw it in a file.

6 So when this person offends five, six,  
7 seven, eight, nine times, and we get called because  
8 it's in downtown Gallup, nothing pops up because  
9 everything is sitting in a folder in a box somewhere  
10 in a tribe. So this is where we, as law  
11 enforcement, need to figure out how are we going to  
12 work with those tribes, BIA, and all these other  
13 agencies in trying to figure out this -- the data  
14 sharings.

15 Because that is a huge gap, that data  
16 sharing. As soon as you step on or off the  
17 reservation, it's tough, folks. You know, we, as  
18 State Police, have a Navajo Nation cross-commission  
19 agreement. We use that to, as much as our ability,  
20 to help them out when, you know, we can within the  
21 confinements of that commission.

22 So, you know, we've actually thought about  
23 using that Navajo Nation cross-commission as a guide  
24 or a template to move on to all these other tribes  
25 and try and get some type of Navajo -- or, I'm

1 sorry -- some type of MOU or commission with other  
2 tribes. That's where all your gaps are at.

3 You know, the tribal officers, as soon as  
4 it gets to the tribal line, what do they do? They  
5 stop. "It's not my problem anymore. It's Grants'  
6 problem, Milan, Albuquerque, Gallup."

7 When it gets on the Rez, where the state  
8 and the county officers say, "It's their problem  
9 now." So that's one of the hugest things like that  
10 that we need to figure out how to overcome. And one  
11 of the ideas that we need to put on this report is a  
12 recommendation on how to fix that from a law  
13 enforcement perspective.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. Very  
16 quickly, I just want to clarify that. When you are  
17 sharing your ideas and input, if you're using  
18 acronyms, to state them out fully so that everyone  
19 feels inclusive and everyone knows what we're  
20 talking about. Also, for recording purposes, we can  
21 document that as well.

22 MS. ELIZABETH GONZALES: I agree with  
23 Captain Velasquez, because it is difficult for us,  
24 with the Office of Medical Investigator, to obtain  
25 any information, because, again, when we get

1 information, we have to deal with each sovereign  
2 nation individually. And in order to get this  
3 incorporated and develop some type of systematic  
4 approach where each and every organization, the  
5 sovereign nations, the federal lands, and the state  
6 agencies, there has to be one type of systematic  
7 approach, just like we had to develop with the Amber  
8 Alert, we have to develop that throughout the entire  
9 state of New Mexico.

10 And it's working with the Bureau of Indian  
11 Affairs, who can go ahead with the Southern and the  
12 Northern Pueblos and try to incorporate different  
13 things with the specific database that we can look  
14 into and reach into. 'Cause when we deal with  
15 missing persons, we do. We do it at a local level  
16 with the Albuquerque Police Department. Then we go  
17 at a state level. And then we hit the national  
18 level, which is the NamUs database and CODIS.

19 These are just different databases that  
20 are used for missing persons. Then we have to work  
21 with people who obtain the DNA analysis to help us  
22 when we find remains that are unidentified.

23 One of the first things we need to help  
24 and develop when we incorporate this is a systematic  
25 approach that every organization within the

1 sovereign nations, the State of New Mexico, and the  
2 federal lands can all use so we could communicate  
3 openly with each other. And we can share that data.

4 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: Just real quick on the  
5 Amber Alert, what she's talking about is years ago,  
6 we worked together, State Police, DPS, with all the  
7 tribes and law enforcement agencies in New Mexico to  
8 incorporate a system where every single police  
9 organization in the state has to go through the  
10 State Police in order to get an Amber Alert issued  
11 out.

12 So it's kind of like funneled up into one,  
13 and it gets pushed out. So we're working with --  
14 let's say, Santa Fe PD, they have an Amber Alert  
15 that needs to go out. They work with our PIO, and  
16 they'll get that information pushed out, but then  
17 the follow-up will go back to that agency. That's  
18 somewhere along that lines of what I think she was  
19 talking about on having that point there.

20 FROM THE FLOOR: What's PIO?

21 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: I'm sorry. Public  
22 Information Officer. Me and acronyms. Sorry.

23 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other thoughts  
24 from the Task Force before we open it up?

25 Okay. So we're hearing NamUs and we're



1 hearing working with law enforcement and the data  
2 they're collecting, and also the other agencies that  
3 are connected to reporting or identifying Missing  
4 and Murdered Indigenous Women. What other sources  
5 can we tap into?

6 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)  
7 Hi, everyone. I currently live here in Albuquerque,  
8 New Mexico. And what I wanted to ask you guys was  
9 have you guys worked with the Ashlyne Mike Amber  
10 Alert? So they recently had a conference at Isleta  
11 Casino about two months ago. So it's now a whole  
12 new system they're trying to broadcast along Indian  
13 country. So it's very new, and it was passed  
14 because of what happened to Ashlyne Mike in  
15 Shiprock, New Mexico.

16 That is my question for you, if you guys  
17 are working with them or have heard of this whole --  
18 it's actually put on by National Criminal Justice  
19 Training Center.

20 MAJOR ROMERO: I haven't heard of that.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: And you said the  
22 National Criminal --

23 FROM THE FLOOR: National Criminal Justice  
24 Training Centers.

25 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: They organized that

1 group?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

3 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Okay. So that's  
4 definitely someone we want to reach out to.

5 Is anyone on the Task Force working with  
6 them or --

7 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: we've gone to some  
8 of the trainings, BIA has.

9 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you for that  
10 input. So along the same lines, if there are  
11 groups, organizations, or, again, just sources of  
12 information we need to be aware of to do this work,  
13 let us know.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)  
15 Hi, everyone. My name is Cheyenne Antonio. I'm  
16 with the Sex Trafficking Project Coordinator for the  
17 Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women.

18 (Native language spoken.)

19 Hello, relatives. I just have to say my  
20 own clans, because I have relatives everywhere.

21 But with this, with the data part, so  
22 there is the missing side and the murdered side.  
23 And one thing I'd like to know, recently at the  
24 Coalition, we've been having conversations about  
25 pueblo abductions in white vans.

1           And so if we could also please start to  
2 mention that and figure out ways that our  
3 communities are prepared for this, because these  
4 things -- you know, oftentimes, it takes two hours,  
5 three hours for any law enforcement to come, for  
6 victim advocates to know where our houses are.

7           And I'm only saying this out of  
8 experience, because I come from a very rural area.  
9 And it's checkerboard, state, federal, tribal. And  
10 so we know this issue very well when no one comes.  
11 And so -- and there's no phone service. And so with  
12 that, what are ways that communities can mobilize?

13           And I feel like this goes back to rural  
14 communities. And at the Coalition, that's just some  
15 of the conversations we're having in trying to  
16 navigate is what are ways that SD can navigate, you  
17 know, abductions and what is the community response  
18 with that.

19           And then also there are multiple task  
20 force and committees and other coalitions that we  
21 work with. And I -- such as the communicated -- no,  
22 no, no -- Community Coordinated Response Teams. And  
23 each county has them. McKinley County has them.  
24 Sandoval County has them. Santa Fe, Rio Arriba  
25 County has them. And it's all around responding to

1 communities.

2 And so if anything, DV -- domestic  
3 violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, those are  
4 all avenues of why this happens. And it's so deeply  
5 ingrained into our history that we have to figure  
6 out ways to work with all of these other violences.  
7 It's just -- you know, it's homicide, yes. But DV  
8 leads up to homicide. Sexual assault, Ashlynn  
9 Mike, it leads up to murder.

10 So I just want to put that out there.

11 Also, with databases, as far as Amber  
12 Alert systems, I know that the police officers have  
13 three hours to report. And we saw what happened  
14 with Ashlynn Mike. And now this is leading to  
15 where our own nations have to look for better alert  
16 systems.

17 And so I would like to just kind of know  
18 what does that relationship look like with the state  
19 Amber Alert system and to our nations and pueblos?  
20 Because there -- you know, there is a gap there.  
21 And just, like, what does that look like?

22 And I know you have to be certified,  
23 clearinghouse certification. You can correct me if  
24 I'm wrong. This is just from the outcome of the  
25 meetings that we've had of being clearinghouse

1 certified, which meaning law enforcement has three  
2 hours to report a missing child, missing person.

3 And so with that, do our tribal nations --  
4 do our tribal law enforcement have to have  
5 clearinghouse certification? And what does this  
6 process look like? Does BIA need clearinghouse  
7 certification in order to use New Mexico Amber Alert  
8 systems?

9 So I was just wondering about that. And  
10 also data on how many of these cases are prosecuted.

11 And so at the Coalition, we do technical  
12 assistance and training. And, oftentimes, our  
13 prosecutors are not well aware of MMIW. And it's  
14 sad to see. However, we still have to work with  
15 them.

16 But in that gap as well, from where the --  
17 the incident's reported and to where it goes into  
18 prosecution to where its next level, what does that  
19 process look like and how is it continuing? Because  
20 it does leave families in the dark.

21 And if -- you know, if you don't -- if  
22 you're from the middle of nowhere, which is where  
23 I'm from, oftentimes they don't get prosecuted. And  
24 I'm just coming at this from experience, because  
25 coming from a checkerboard territory, you don't know

1 where all these pieces go. And so just to put that  
2 out there.

3 Those are just gaps that I see, and I  
4 would really like to see more of the prosecutions of  
5 what is that process and how that relationship goes  
6 back to the pueblos and to the nations, because our  
7 nations and pueblos are responsible for their  
8 citizens and caring for them and making sure that  
9 the resources are there. Just to put that -- put it  
10 out there.

11 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you for your  
12 comments.

13 FROM THE FLOOR: Just a couple of things  
14 to add. Jennifer Denetdale. I would encourage the  
15 Task Force to go visit places where there are  
16 indigenous people where they gather, for example.  
17 Here in Albuquerque, the Albuquerque Indian Center  
18 is not -- has not been a part of the Albuquerque  
19 Homelessness Task Force. They have not been invited  
20 to this meeting today, even though they serve the  
21 largest number of our people. Most of them are Dine  
22 who live on the streets here in Albuquerque.

23 They know them by names. And they can  
24 tell you the movement of people. Farmington has an  
25 Indian Center as well. I think Cortez has -- that's

1 Colorado -- has an Indian Center as well. But I  
2 encourage you to visit places of community  
3 gathering, just to get a sense of what it's like on  
4 the ground.

5 The second thing that I want to say is in  
6 terms of the report, one of the questions that we  
7 ask as indigenous people and as Dine is what -- and  
8 we heard some public comment today. But I think the  
9 point of what does justice look like? What does  
10 indigenous liberation look like?

11 Obviously, we have constraints that deal  
12 with being labeled domestic dependents of the  
13 United States. And so have an imagination and they  
14 put that in the report of what does it look like?  
15 What kind of a community do you imagine? And so I  
16 think that would be a really nice section at the  
17 beginning to have people say, "This is what it  
18 should look like," a really wonderful imagination of  
19 what we want our communities and our state to look  
20 like.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. Any other  
22 comments about sources where we can understand the  
23 magnitude of this crisis? And what are some  
24 nontraditional sources? I know communities are  
25 being very creative about taking action on their

1 own. And I've seen social media groups where people  
2 are reporting and putting up links of relatives that  
3 have gone missing. So those ideas as well. Where  
4 do we go to get that information?

5 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. My name  
6 is Lorraine Edmo, and I'm a member of the  
7 Shoshone-Bannock Tribe of Idaho. But I've lived  
8 here in New Mexico off and on probably 13 or  
9 14 years. And then I recently came from Washington,  
10 D.C., where I worked as Deputy Director for Tribal  
11 Affairs on the Office on Violence Against Women.

12 One of my employees, one of my program  
13 specialists was Kathy Howkumi, who's now with BIA.

14 As far as resources you can tap into, I  
15 was going to recommend the National Institute of  
16 Justice. They have done a number of studies on  
17 violence against Indian women nationwide. And I  
18 know that they have covered the subject here in  
19 New Mexico. They've funded a project with American  
20 Indian Development Associates. Edam [ph] Elkin,  
21 who's from Jemez Pueblo, has been one of the -- has  
22 been the lead person on that project.

23 And I'm not sure what the status of that  
24 study is right now. But they did, under the 2005  
25 Violence Against Women Act, there was a national



1 mandated study on violence against Indian women  
2 nationwide. And it was funded for years out of our  
3 office. Probably five or six million dollars went  
4 into that study.

5 So in a -- you can check with the National  
6 Institute of Justice there in Washington and see if  
7 it's still being done or if there is a final study.

8 And one of the really good resources is  
9 Leslie Hagen with the National Training Center in  
10 South Carolina -- Kathy might know what the official  
11 name is, what the learning -- National Advocacy  
12 Center. Sorry. But she would be a great resource,  
13 too, for information. And she works closely with  
14 FBI and Department of Justice, the national Office  
15 of Tribal Justice in Washington.

16 As far as any upcoming events that you  
17 might be interested in attending, maybe a couple of  
18 Task Force members could go to the Women Are Sacred  
19 Conference that's coming up in Minnesota next June.  
20 They have a lot of good presentations and will  
21 probably have a lot of updated information.

22 Okay. I wanted to offer those.

23 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you.

24 FROM THE FLOOR: It was the National  
25 Institute of Justice. It's the main research arm of

1 the Department of Justice. And if you look under US  
2 DOJ, look under National Institute of Justice,  
3 it's -- I'm not sure if it's been -- if that study  
4 has been funded over the last two or three years,  
5 you know, with the current administration. But it  
6 was continually funded under the previous  
7 administration.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you.

9 FROM THE FLOOR: Thanks.

10 FROM THE FLOOR: My name is Shereena  
11 Baker. I'm half Southern Ute Tribe group. And I am  
12 an intern for Sovereign Bodies Institute. So I am  
13 here today to present on behalf of Sovereign Bodies  
14 Institute. So I would like to put a plug in for  
15 that as a resource as one of the Missing and  
16 Murdered Indigenous Women databases.

17 Also, I'm a Ph.D. student at the  
18 University of New Mexico in the education  
19 department. And, earlier, when you had suggested  
20 other places to plug in, I had saw [verbatim]  
21 nothing about education. And according to our  
22 database, there are numerous numbers of children --  
23 of girls that are becoming missing.

24 And when we've looked at our data, maybe a  
25 girl -- a woman -- would become missing in her 20s

1 or 30s, but her record follows back to maybe when  
2 she was five years old, maybe seven, maybe thirteen.  
3 And I think that when it comes to prevention in the  
4 task, I think we need to think of our children.

5 And may- -- you know, I just saw an  
6 article last month that Florida passed a -- a  
7 proclamation or something that they're going to  
8 start educating in the school systems about  
9 trafficking.

10 And I know this is, you know, a big issue,  
11 not just for Native Americans, but I think for all  
12 of New Mexico. This is a huge -- a huge popular  
13 resource -- popular place for trafficking to happen.  
14 And I think that maybe if you guys included the  
15 educational system, or APS, Albuquerque Public  
16 Schools, Bernalillo Public Schools, on maybe  
17 implementing that into their curriculum as well,  
18 this can be an important role on prevention. And  
19 that's just my suggestion and based on your  
20 database, like, information.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Great point. As a  
22 former educator, the schools is definitely a center  
23 point for a lot of these issues that we see  
24 happening. And so definitely tapping into the  
25 schools.

1 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)  
2 My name is Brenda. I'm a tribal member from Nambe  
3 Pueblo. Kathy, it's wonderful to see you, my  
4 sister.

5 I am here with my colleague, Sofia  
6 Sanchez. We are both field representatives for  
7 Congresswoman Deb Haaland. We work in her district  
8 office.

9 And I want to thank everyone, all the  
10 coordinators for being here. We're privileged to be  
11 here. The Congresswoman has put to -- has either  
12 sponsored or co-sponsored eight pieces of  
13 legislation at the federal level. And as the Task  
14 Force prepares information, we invite you to look at  
15 the legislation. It's on her website,  
16 Haaland.house.gov. And we would really be receptive  
17 to any feedback or gaps that you recognize that we  
18 could send to our legislative director and to the  
19 Congresswoman as you proceed with the report.

20 Thank you very much.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: I just want to let you  
22 know that we are a resource. So anytime, you know,  
23 you're talking about any relevant events where --  
24 what resources you can have, always come to our  
25 office. This is a huge issue for the Congresswoman

1 and in any way that we can help. I know Secretary  
2 Trujillo knows that. So feel free to reach out.

3 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thinking about just  
4 where we can tap into the sources where -- where  
5 it's being reported, but maybe they're not calling  
6 that, is I want us to think about the role that  
7 advocates in organizations on the ground that  
8 provide services can play and helping us understand  
9 what's happening. So if you have any thoughts about  
10 that, please raise your hand and share.

11 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay. Sorry. Real  
12 quick. On our Coalition page at CSVANW.org, we're  
13 member-driven. And so we do have shelters; we do  
14 have sexual assault coalitions, direct service  
15 providers. It's all on our website. And so if you  
16 don't know but would like to get familiar with what  
17 New Mexico offers as far as direct services -- and  
18 there's some here as well, such as, like, getting  
19 words out on your missing or murdered relative,  
20 like, there are resources on our page.

21 But also I would like to go back to my  
22 comments before about data. New Mexico right now is  
23 being targeted for a lot of the oil and gas. And I  
24 would like to mention that -- the man camps, right?  
25 We have a big community that's coming in that

1 doesn't know our homelands that -- and they can make  
2 a big impact within our homelands.

3           And we see it in Farmington. We're now  
4 seeing it down in the southeast region and what does  
5 that relationship look like as far as numbers. And  
6 I want to put that out there, because it's something  
7 that's never talked about. But I would like to  
8 address that, because right now, like the Attorney  
9 General's Office does have an investigator that  
10 specifically looks at women being trafficked within  
11 man camps. And if you'd like to know more  
12 information, there's definitely looking into the Tar  
13 Sands up in Canada, the Bakken Shelf up in North  
14 Dakota with the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Tribes.  
15 So definitely looking at how their tribes are also  
16 combating these corporations coming into their  
17 homelands and kidnapping children.

18           So just to put that out there and to also  
19 look at that and making sure that their state  
20 recognizes that and finding ways to talk more about  
21 it, because we have to. And silence is not consent.  
22 And so please just put that out there.

23           SECRETARY TRUJILLO: What's the website?

24           FROM THE FLOOR: CSVANW.org. I know  
25 that's super-long. Thank you.

1 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other thoughts  
2 about this? Something else I want to put out there,  
3 just a little bit about my background.

4 I've been doing this type of work for a  
5 little over four years. And I got to work with DOJ  
6 the past three years, put together a national  
7 database of resources. So that's another resource  
8 is the tribal resource tool, TribalResourceTool.org.  
9 And there are a number of New Mexico-based resources  
10 that are available on that database. And it will  
11 populate all types of services for victims of all  
12 crimes.

13 But in those conversations, as we built  
14 that tool, some things that came up when we talked  
15 about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is to  
16 the point that the woman just brought up is human  
17 trafficking and how that is related to it, domestic  
18 violence, the intersections of domestic violence and  
19 our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

20 But -- gosh. There was another point that  
21 I wanted to bring up. But, yeah. So I want to -- I  
22 just want to throw that out there so that we're  
23 thinking about everybody when we talk about what  
24 resources we should be tapping into to understand  
25 the data is going beyond, because, really, we're

1 starting from scratch. So we really have to be  
2 creative about how we figure out what is really  
3 happening and, yeah, how do we move forward.

4 Go ahead.

5 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay. Good afternoon,  
6 everybody. My name is Kathy Howkumi and I work with  
7 Bureau of Indian Affairs as a victim specialist.

8 A couple of recommendations in terms of  
9 just, like, the resources. Here in New Mexico, we  
10 are really lagging in any kind of resource for  
11 victims of all crimes. So we know that that's going  
12 to be a big barrier to anybody needing assistance.  
13 So I would suggest all of you that are doing  
14 advocacy work right now that we provide this  
15 information to the Task Force about what kind of  
16 services we all provide so that they know what is  
17 available and what gaps exist.

18 The other thing that I'd like to do, at  
19 least just kind of throw out there, is when we do  
20 identify these resources out there, have they been  
21 vetted? Have they been vetted by you as community  
22 members? Because they should be culturally  
23 competent to be able to provide those services to  
24 our people.

25 The other thing is recommendations that



1 are going to be forthcoming from the committee. Is  
2 there going to be two separate kinds of  
3 recommendations? Because this is a committee made  
4 up of organizations, in some cases grassroots and  
5 federal agencies, state agencies. Is there going to  
6 be recommendations for tribal leadership that they  
7 have to also consider in this work?

8 So those are the comments that I have.  
9 Thank you.

10 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you for your  
11 input.

12 Any other thoughts? I do want to wrap up  
13 this portion, because I have one or two more  
14 questions I want to cover.

15 FROM THE FLOOR: One thing is that a  
16 number of years ago -- I think it was, like, 15  
17 years ago -- we found on state police forms, like,  
18 city police forms, county police forms, that we  
19 wanted to collect a particular type of information.

20 And I know the officers can back me up on  
21 this. It isn't as easy as just, like, reprinting  
22 something off of a state form. And so you really do  
23 have to get things like Senate and House and -- at  
24 the New Mexico Legislature -- to talk about how you  
25 redo a form so we can actually capture the Native

1 component, the cultural identity, because it's often  
2 not captured on different forms.

3 It might list as Other, Hispanic and  
4 Other; and so just so that we can get a clear  
5 picture of what's occurring on law enforcement forms  
6 would be to have a cultural identity, specifically  
7 American Indian, Alaska Native, or how someone may  
8 identify themselves. And we don't have that right  
9 now.

10 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Great point. I'm  
11 going to close this part of the discussion but allow  
12 the Task Force to give their final input. Ready to  
13 move on? All right.

14 So we've already kind of been covering  
15 this. A lot of you have given your input about who  
16 we should be connecting with on the ground, who is  
17 not present in the Task Force that we need to  
18 elevate those voices so that they're heard and  
19 represented.

20 We did survey the Task Force prior to us  
21 gathering. And this was some of their feedback of  
22 who we would be connecting with [inaudible] on here.  
23 But is there any other partners that is not listed  
24 that we should be reaching out to?

25 Or what has not already been said?

1 Everybody's been giving a lot of resources.

2 (No response.)

3 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any ideas from the  
4 community?

5 FROM THE FLOOR: So the New Mexico  
6 Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

7 FROM THE FLOOR: Missing and Murdered  
8 Indigenous Women Study Committee.

9 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other partners?

10 FROM THE FLOOR: Missing and Murdered Dine  
11 Relatives. And also kind of think about bringing in  
12 the Alzheimer's Association of New Mexico.

13 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: So just looking at  
14 the list, I would say maybe the State Attorney  
15 General's Office.

16 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi, everyone. I'm one of  
17 the epidemiologists that works here at one of the  
18 tribal epidemiology centers here in Albuquerque.  
19 And I would put tribal epi centers, because we're  
20 mandated by the government to exist as a service to  
21 tribes.

22 So that's a great source, if you want to  
23 get ahold of native epidemiologists who do  
24 qualitative and quantitative work, CDPR, et cetera,  
25 et cetera. And we have an office here. The Navajo

1 Nation also has an office. So I just want to put  
2 that out there.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: I put my hands up, like,  
4 [inaudible]. A good one would be the New Mexico  
5 Health Department. [Inaudible.] That's a good one.  
6 The other one would be what about your faith-based  
7 communities that are outside of the tribes, your  
8 different churches, your different -- there's so  
9 many of them. I'm not saying that they're good or  
10 bad; but, you know, they're there.

11 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Anyone else? Indian  
12 Health? IHS and hospitals.

13 Again, you all have those sticky notes.  
14 So if you don't want to verbally share your  
15 information, write it down and leave it at the back  
16 table with one of us.

17 And then we are working as a Task Force to  
18 create a platform to continue gathering community  
19 input. So this is not the end of your opportunity  
20 to share your thoughts.

21 Are there other ideas? Task Force?

22 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: I would like to  
23 look into international tribal communities; so,  
24 like, in Canada and the Southern Nations. I think  
25 there's a lot of work that has been done in the

1 north and the south. And in the south, it's  
2 straight up femicide that's moving its way up.

3 And -- but I know, like in Canada, there's  
4 a lot of resources already. Women that have come as  
5 delegates to this country, it would be interesting  
6 to see what they would recommend. I know there's a  
7 lot of organizations.

8 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: So the international  
9 point, something to think about is Stephanie and I  
10 were at the NCAI, the National Conference of  
11 American Indians Violence Against Native Women's  
12 Task Force meeting last month. And there was a  
13 presentation about our indigenous relatives who are  
14 from, you know, Mexico, Central and South America,  
15 who are living here or living in these border states  
16 that are experiencing violence. And they're not  
17 being identified as indigenous, and they're not  
18 receiving services.

19 And so there is a group that you can find  
20 out -- get in contact, get the name of that group.  
21 So we can maybe even tap into them as well.

22 Get my steps in today.

23 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, everyone. My name  
24 is Dawn Begay. I'm with the City of Albuquerque  
25 Office of Native American Affairs. And one piece of

1 this I think we should also look at is  
2 communications.

3 So I really appreciate that KOAT is here.  
4 But in the report that came out when they looked at  
5 media, a lot of time victims of downright missing or  
6 murdered are often revictimized as putting the blame  
7 on them.

8 So I think we kind of need to do some  
9 cultural awareness in the types of messages that  
10 we're putting out, the communications we're putting  
11 out, and be sure that what we're trying to tell the  
12 general public or the members or create a sense of  
13 trust and awareness and cultural safety is  
14 appropriate.

15 And so that huge piece is going around  
16 comms and who we partner with, who we hire, how we  
17 do this is going to be reflective of our community  
18 and that we're telling our own stories, or that when  
19 we partner with someone, that the right stories come  
20 across in a good way.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: That's a really good  
22 point. And I want to open it up to hear ideas about  
23 media partners that we should be linking up with,  
24 especially Native-run media outlets. If there are  
25 ideas about that, please share.

1 FROM THE FLOOR: I'd like to offer the  
2 Organization to Stop Violence Against Native Women  
3 as a resource. As an organization, we work with a  
4 lot of folks that are up there on that list.

5 FROM THE FLOOR: I think for the law  
6 enforcement side, inviting all the posts, New Mexico  
7 posts. There is a post in Utah, Colorado, Navajo  
8 Nation post, to try to come up with a universal,  
9 like you were saying, paperwork to get things going.

10 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: Our veterans  
11 groups.

12 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Veterans groups,  
13 LGBTQI, two spirit groups.

14 I'm going to move on to the next slide.  
15 Really, we initially had this set up to where, you  
16 know, the Task Force would give their input; then we  
17 would open it up to the public. But we see that you  
18 all have stepped up, and we wanted to honor that.

19 So now I just want to -- I think those  
20 were all of our key questions that we had. But I  
21 want to open it up to just getting a more general  
22 understanding of, you know, what we're up against.

23 And so if you have -- if you want to  
24 describe the crisis of Missing Murdered and  
25 Indigenous Women in your own words at this point or

1 give other ideas that you may not have been able to  
2 share at different points of the session, I want to  
3 open -- just open it up for general feedback and  
4 input at this point.

5 FROM THE FLOOR: There's one situation  
6 that we keep coming across. And that's the State  
7 Missing Persons database that's not kept up. So a  
8 lot of us advocates use that along with NamUs. And  
9 the states are really bad about not keeping that up.  
10 So if someone has gone missing and they've been  
11 found, they'd still be missing in the database a  
12 year later. That's something maybe they can step up  
13 on trying to keep that updated.

14 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: A good point. So the  
15 New Mexico State Missing and Murdered -- Missing  
16 database? Yeah.

17 FROM THE FLOOR: I think one major issue,  
18 and I know we kind of talked about it earlier, is  
19 the jurisdictional issues. When we do have families  
20 that reach out to us at times, they are given the  
21 runaround by law enforcement agencies.

22 One case in particular, we had a woman who  
23 was looking for her brother, and she filed that  
24 missing person's report in Farmington. Farmington  
25 Police told her to go back to the Navajo Nation and



1 file it. Navajo Nation said, you know, "This might  
2 be..." -- I don't know if it's Farmington or county.

3 So how do we delineate those lines for the  
4 families so that they know what that process is? So  
5 we really need to clarify that process for the  
6 families, for anyone who goes through that.

7 And I think the other one is, you know,  
8 how can the State support the tribes in terms of if  
9 they have a missing persons task force. Recently,  
10 First Lady Phefelia Nez, as well as the Office of  
11 the President and Vice President have been in the  
12 planning stages and have implemented a Missing  
13 Persons Task Force.

14 So what resources can the State provide to  
15 tribes who are starting to address that issue? I  
16 think taking that message back to our policymakers  
17 at the state level and really looking at ways to  
18 support how tribes are empowering themselves to take  
19 on this issue. So I think that's really -- really  
20 important.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: Just to add up to what  
22 our sister here is saying. Recently, we've been  
23 working -- or trying to work with Cecelia Finona.  
24 And this is just one of the examples of responding  
25 to a case. So our -- our auntie, Ciona -- Cecelia

1 Finona, who is missing out of Farmington -- I'd also  
2 like to mention that a lot of our Native relatives  
3 live in state jurisdictions. And so if a sister  
4 goes missing on state territories, what does it look  
5 like in responding to that and working with the  
6 tribe and working with the FBI, especially when  
7 families host their own missing searches?

8 And I'd also like to open that up as well,  
9 because when a sister or auntie goes missing, that  
10 responsibility goes back onto the family, and it is  
11 the family that are going out, you know, into our  
12 communities, into San Juan River, wherever, and  
13 looking for them.

14 And so what does that relationship look  
15 like between jurisdictions, state, tribal and FBI?  
16 Because we did ask, like, what does that look like?  
17 How is the FBI engaging with the investigators in  
18 Navajo? What does that look like if she turns up in  
19 Southern Ute? Then what does that relationship look  
20 like. And, really, just navigating and responding  
21 to a missing person, rather it being, "Oh, that's  
22 state -- that's on state jurisdiction," so the --  
23 you know, whoever that advocate or that investigator  
24 that is at that location, just figuring out ways to  
25 navigate that and making it easier for the family.

1           Because oftentimes families get sent to --  
2        "You've got to go to Santa Fe."

3           "Oh, no, no, no. You've got to go to  
4        Window Rock."

5           "Oh, no, no, no. You're going to have to  
6        go to Crownpoint."

7           That's a long drive. And to ask families  
8        to do that while they're grieving, it can be a lot  
9        of work. So just to put that out there.

10          MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Any other comments?

11          FROM THE FLOOR: I have one more. So I  
12        just did this presentation for one of my classes on  
13        representation. Since I'm a Ph.D. student in a  
14        class, it was with undergrads and graduate students.  
15        But we had to teach a class. And so it was for my  
16        Books and Other Related Materials for Young Adults.  
17        And we -- there was a book called  
18        "#NotYourPrincess."

19                And so that's what our teacher chose to  
20        represent like the Native presence and like books  
21        that are offered for young adults.

22                And so I did my presentation on  
23        representation here in New Mexico. I went around  
24        and I took pictures of billboards, went to the  
25        airport, went to the mall. I went to all these

1 different places that like we are, that we are  
2 present, that we see every day.

3 And what I found was very disturbing. On  
4 the billboards, there was just, you know, jewelry.  
5 A Native woman that was -- I feel was sexualized.  
6 But -- and then there was another one in the mall  
7 where I did a PowerPoint, and this girl, she was  
8 brown. She may not have been Native American. But  
9 as a child, I looked at women who had brown hair,  
10 brown eyes, as a representative of me.

11 And so she -- I don't know what race she  
12 was. But it said "Pregnant," question mark, and it  
13 had a number. And right behind that was a picture  
14 of a European-descent woman who was a model.

15 Just the reputation here in Albuquerque, I  
16 think that maybe that could be in the back of your  
17 mind of how are we representing our Native women, of  
18 our brown-colored folks?

19 And also in the airport, not so much like  
20 pictures, but in the gift shop, there was nothing  
21 but just a representation -- you know, I asked the  
22 class. I said, "What do you see here? What do you  
23 see as, like, Native American?"

24 Like, there was gift card -- you know,  
25 cards that said Happy Birthday, Happy Anniversary,

1 and there were all these women who are just gorgeous  
2 with animals next to them. I don't even own a dog.  
3 Like, this doesn't represent me.

4 And I'm, like, trying to explain because  
5 I'm the only Native American in my class. I was  
6 explaining to them what representation can do to a  
7 child and what is the representation happening with  
8 MMIW. Are we representing this as like a good thing  
9 that we are like coming together?

10 Like, I think this is important work. But  
11 I think when it comes to talking to our children  
12 that this is not their future. This is not their  
13 reality. Like, I don't want them to think that this  
14 is -- this is what they expect.

15 And so when it comes to representation for  
16 our children, I think we need to be mindful of how  
17 we talk about this. I think the work is very  
18 important; but I also think the representation can  
19 be harmful as well. So I want to keep that in mind.  
20 Yeah.

21 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Good point. And to  
22 add my two cents, if I may, I think you're alluding  
23 to something that can be very powerful with the  
24 report. And one of the recommendations is our  
25 community recommendation, our family recommendation

1 is how do we change the narrative or change the  
2 perception in the young minds of our indigenous  
3 children who are growing up hearing these  
4 statistics, hearing these stories and thinking that  
5 it is going to be their destiny to go missing, one,  
6 or to be murdered or to be assaulted, and so how do  
7 we break that mentality.

8 Any other just general inputs about what  
9 we've discussed today or how you would describe the  
10 issue in your own words?

11 MS. BECKY JOHNSON: Hopefully, I don't  
12 lose it. I'm usually pretty good at this. But my  
13 name is Becky. I come from Navajo Nation, from  
14 Shiprock. And one of the things I do is I go out  
15 and advocate mainly on the topic of sexual assault,  
16 because I am a sexual assault survivor.

17 I was 13 years old in 1991 when I was  
18 sexually assaulted. Something I just started  
19 sharing, I am still -- I'm okay with, but I'm still  
20 trying to process is the night that I escaped from  
21 the captor's house. I ran naked from his house, and  
22 I ran to my aunt's house.

23 One thing I found out, I think three years  
24 ago, was my sister was the one that was on the other  
25 side of the door. And as I'm banging on this door,

1 I see him coming. And that's all I can remember,  
2 and then me being inside my aunt's house safe.

3 But one thing my sister shared with me on  
4 a trip we took when I went out to go speak publicly  
5 was that night she told me that this man actually  
6 had my legs and was pulling me, and I was hanging on  
7 to the side rail. He pulled me -- he was pulling.  
8 Just as the door opened, he got scared and he let  
9 go. And I was able to get inside and be safe.

10 I think about the Missing and Murdered  
11 Indigenous Women and even about the men, and I think  
12 about the reality of me possibly being one of these  
13 people on the wall. Because had he grabbed me and  
14 taken (sic) me back, he probably would have killed  
15 me, because my -- my rape was violent. And it  
16 lasted for several hours. I was choked. I was  
17 beat.

18 So when I started going out advocating, my  
19 hope was to bring awareness. I wanted to break the  
20 stigma that we need to talk about these things. We  
21 can no longer keep it silent. Because in my  
22 community and my family, it was always, "Shh, don't  
23 say anything. Don't talk about it. Let's just move  
24 on."

25 I went through the process. I went

1 through tribal police, through federal court. And  
2 all of these places failed me. They victim-blamed.  
3 And so that broke my trust. I spent a lot of years  
4 angry, afraid to talk about things.

5 But one thing I had to learn was how to  
6 live back in this community with this man. And I  
7 started to reach for help. I struggled with  
8 alcoholism. I never got hooked on drugs. So I'm  
9 always thankful for that.

10 I tried to kill myself, and there are many  
11 days I wished I had died.

12 Just this year, I come full-circle. I'm  
13 42 years old. This is how long it took me. But  
14 I've come full-circle. And I have let that  
15 13-year-old girl go. She died that night. But I  
16 didn't.

17 So I'm recreating me. And I'm going out  
18 trying to advocate and bring awareness to all the  
19 people, not just in tribal communities but outside.  
20 I have been lucky to go different places to share my  
21 story. So I'm thankful for this opportunity to be  
22 on this Task Force.

23 I am not the only story in my family. In  
24 2000, my auntie, she was murdered by Robert Fry. He  
25 got sentenced to the death penalty. We, as a



1 family, we got together, and we talked about things.  
2 Because in tribal -- in Navajo Nation, they say, you  
3 know, "You don't wish death on people."

4 So we left it up to the courts to decide,  
5 and he got it. Just this year, he was given a life  
6 sentence. They overturned it.

7 We take it with a grain of salt. But I go  
8 out and want to speak about my auntie. Because I  
9 want her voice to still be heard. I don't want her  
10 name to fall forgotten.

11 Then there's a third family member. My  
12 little cousin Tiffany Reid. Sixteen years old, she  
13 went missing. We haven't seen her. We haven't --  
14 we have no idea where she's at.

15 One of the biggest struggles my family is  
16 facing is trying to get this communication between  
17 law enforcement. And that's one thing that I think  
18 is the biggest downfall is my hopes of trying to  
19 overcome, and what I hope our group here come to, is  
20 trying to bring that communication back.

21 Because when we try and go to Navajo PD --  
22 because people send us information, "Oh, this person  
23 said they murdered her, this person this, we thought  
24 we saw her here," we try and get them to call.

25 Nobody will return our calls. I called

1 Dispatch just, like, last month, I think, because we  
2 got wind that she was here in Albuquerque. And they  
3 sent us a photo. The progressional photo kind of  
4 looks like -- it's a pretty good match with what  
5 this girl looks like.

6 But nobody will return my calls to help us  
7 to further investigate.

8 Two years ago -- so I work in law  
9 enforcement. And two-and-a-half years ago, I think,  
10 I was working, and I heard her name over the radio.  
11 Somebody was running her on data. Somebody was  
12 trying to use her name, her birth date.

13 But then the dispatcher came back saying,  
14 "Negative 29," meaning no wants. And I'm, like,  
15 that's my own cousin. She is. She should be  
16 entered missing.

17 So I took off to where the officers were.  
18 And they said, "Who's saying they're Tiffany? Who's  
19 saying they're Tiffany Reid?"

20 And the officer pointed to who it was.

21 And I said, "Tiffany Reid is supposed to  
22 be entered as missing. I want to talk to that  
23 person."

24 They opened the door. I said, "How do you  
25 know Tiffany?"

1 I tried asking, but because she wasn't  
2 listed as missing, my coworker was, like, "Well,  
3 we're just -- we'll find out who she is when we get  
4 to the jail."

5 That was that. I got her name. I went  
6 down to Shiprock, asked to speak to somebody,  
7 because I wanted to give them that name and say,  
8 "This person was talking -- was trying to use  
9 Tiffany's information."

10 But nobody -- nobody would return my  
11 calls.

12 Now we're getting all these new leads of,  
13 "This person said they killed her, this is where  
14 they live. I heard so-and-so saying it."

15 I have all this information in my phone.  
16 Nobody will return my calls.

17 I really wish somebody here was from  
18 Navajo Police that's here. But at the same time, I  
19 know what the outcome is going to be, because I  
20 confronted them at a forum that they had in  
21 Shiprock, and I asked, "Why isn't she in N.C.I.C.?"

22 Their response was, "Oh, yeah. Our  
23 missing people got purged. We didn't know Tiffany  
24 was still not re-entered. We don't know who's all  
25 been purged and who's entered in."

1           And I said, "Well, what are you going to  
2 do about it? How can I get her back in?"

3           They didn't have answers. They just said,  
4 "Contact so-and-so. Contact so-and-so. Contact  
5 so-and-so," all the way down to, "I can't take this  
6 information from you. You have to contact Patrol.  
7 Here I said all this information and I get it's a  
8 cold case. But it's my relative and they mean  
9 something to me.

10           I've reached out to different groups here  
11 in Farmington that I know of do work for the  
12 missing -- the sex trafficking, and I've provided  
13 them her photo. And I said, "She's not listed as a  
14 missing person in N.C.I.C. She is in NamUs,  
15 though."

16           And I don't know if they take me serious  
17 or if it still just falls back on she's not N.C.I.C.  
18 and there's nothing we can do about it.

19           But I'm hoping one day somebody might come  
20 across this girl in this photo and be able to get us  
21 in touch with her. Me and my other cousins, we talk  
22 about coming down here and trying to look in this  
23 general area to see if it's her.

24           But I think -- I think we know maybe it's  
25 probably not. But we have that small -- small

1 glimmer of hope.

2           So I hear all the good -- the good things  
3 you guys are sharing, and those are, too, my  
4 feelings. And that's why I sit here. And I'm  
5 really grateful for this opportunity. And I really  
6 hope -- I hope I can work with everybody here to  
7 help find a solution. Thank you.

8           MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you so much for  
9 sharing with us today. Again, I really do want to  
10 commend everyone in this room for just the respect  
11 that you all have shown and demonstrated. We all  
12 come from different tribes, different pueblos,  
13 communities, backgrounds, you know, jobs.

14           And we're not always going to share the  
15 same opinion. We're going to have different  
16 experiences and some of them are going to be  
17 similar. And so to have everyone in this room  
18 really demonstrate that they have respect for  
19 whatever -- what everyone else has to say, I think  
20 is huge, and we want to keep that going throughout  
21 this task force, that everybody's voices is going to  
22 be heard and respected.

23           So at this time, I do want to wrap up,  
24 because we are coming towards the end of the  
25 meeting. And we want to allow the Task Force to

1 share their final comments or thoughts, or maybe  
2 even describe what brought them to doing this work  
3 as we wrap up in today's meeting.

4 Maybe we'll start on this side.

5 MR. MATTHEW STRAND: There we are. Sorry.  
6 I'd like to thank everybody for being here today.  
7 We do -- we do listen. We are listening to you. We  
8 do hear you.

9 And we -- I promise that we will take this  
10 very seriously, because this is a huge problem. And  
11 I thank you for sharing your stories today. I can't  
12 imagine how difficult it was for some of you to  
13 share.

14 Thank you for being here today. And I  
15 promise that we'll do whatever we can to help  
16 solve -- to help improve the situation. Thank you.

17 MS. ELIZABETH GONZALES: I, too, would  
18 like to thank all of you and -- for your forthcoming  
19 information and the empowering of the voices that  
20 need to be heard. But there's a lot of work to be  
21 done. And we have to start with some type of a  
22 ground point where we can come together and take  
23 that initiative and move forward. So I, too, thank  
24 you.

25 MAJOR ROMERO: I just want to say I'm very

1 touched by the stories I've heard today, and it  
2 makes me more anxious and excited to work here and  
3 cooperate with everybody to get stuff done, and I  
4 really think we're going to do something good here.

5 CAPTAIN VELASQUEZ: Thank you for allowing  
6 us to be on this Task Force. Allow me -- you know,  
7 it is important to me, too, as a district commander  
8 of an area that is so crucial in this discussion,  
9 Gallup, Grants, McKinley County, Cibola County,  
10 having taken that post for just about a year now,  
11 you know, I tell my guys -- and somebody brought up  
12 the point -- a lot of people are used to getting the  
13 runaround. "Well, go to this PD. Go to these guys.  
14 Go to these guys. You've got to go here."

15 And I tell my guys every day, "The buck  
16 stops with us. When somebody comes to our office we  
17 stop, and we help them."

18 That's the point that, like, the Major  
19 said. I'm excited to move forward and figure out  
20 new ideas and new ways to fix this.

21 And, you know, I think about my daughters  
22 down the road, you know, our mothers, our sisters  
23 and everybody else having, you know, come in a  
24 traditional background, living on the reservation,  
25 growing up on the reservation. You know, not only

1 is this important to me because of what I do with my  
2 job, but it's who I am, right? So it impacts us and  
3 me in both ways.

4 And just like the guys that I work with,  
5 the State Police in McKinley County, Cibola County,  
6 not only do we work there, it's not a 9:00-to-5:00  
7 job where the guys go home and they forget about it,  
8 but they have stake in that community. Their kids  
9 go to school there. Their wives work there.

10 We live in those communities, so we have  
11 stake in that community, too, and it affects  
12 everybody. And that's why we want to move forward  
13 with this change, too. Thank you.

14 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: I just want to --  
15 sorry. I just want to thank everybody for what you  
16 shared, everyone who was here today.

17 And I -- I'm really hopeful, based on what  
18 we heard and just seeing people come together, about  
19 what we can all accomplish together.

20 So I just want to thank you. Thank you,  
21 Becky, for sharing, being a part of this. And  
22 that's all I want to say.

23 FIRST LADY NEZ: (Native language spoken.)

24 I'm very thankful for all of you for your  
25 presence here with us today, and it's very



1 educational for me. And so just like these guys  
2 mention on this side, I haven't been to any of the  
3 forums, not -- the duration of an entire event.

4 But with, you know, being on this task  
5 force, one of the questions was, you know, what was  
6 it that brought us, or brought me to here.

7 And I -- you know, from the beginning of  
8 the term -- you know, I'm here as First Lady and  
9 then as a representative of the Navajo Nation. And  
10 I always talk about the stability of homes, you  
11 know, all of that.

12 And that -- when I look at issues, missing  
13 and murdered, and then domestic violence and  
14 everything else that's kind of associated with --  
15 that lends a hand to unhealthy homes, unhealthy  
16 families, that affect children growing up on our  
17 tribal lands, you know, that's something that has  
18 always bothered me, and that's something that I  
19 guess gets me teary-eyed, right?

20 And that's I think that's why I think --  
21 that's what led me here. And just with my  
22 background and studying on criminal justice and  
23 political science, you look at all those  
24 institutions, the policies and everything, and how  
25 it affects us as Native women and families at all

1 levels from federal, state, to our own tribal  
2 communities.

3 And for me to be a part of this task  
4 force, you know, that's -- that's just something  
5 that I guess, you know, I'm glad I'm here with some  
6 experiences and some knowledge in those areas. And  
7 to actually have a voice on behalf of tribal  
8 communities at this level in a task force like this,  
9 that's just something that I'm very grateful for.

10 And, you know, the state, New Mexico, I  
11 just want to say that you have a wonderful governor  
12 who was touched by this. And I'm so glad that she  
13 has created this task force to really open up these  
14 conversations.

15 And I think along the way, of course, it's  
16 going to open up conversations in all different  
17 areas, because it's not just missing and murdered,  
18 and it's not just indigenous women, it's going to  
19 be -- you can't just take a single person and -- in  
20 a family, in a community. You need to really speak  
21 to healing of families and restoration and healing.  
22 It's families and communities we're talking about.

23 And I'm just very glad to be here. And  
24 thank you for all the input that everybody gave us  
25 today. (Native language spoken.)

1 MS. BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA: Thank you to  
2 everyone that's shared. And I'm really humbled and  
3 moved also by today, and I want to put out there  
4 that I'm really open to continuing this conversation  
5 with all of you individually. Feel free to contact  
6 me. I'll be happy to meet.

7 There's a lot I have to learn about the --  
8 the different agency communications. I think what  
9 are coming from being on this task force is really  
10 holding and hearing the big picture of, you know,  
11 systemic issues and the intersections of how all  
12 these small harms and -- around the cultural  
13 violence that we've been living in through  
14 colonialism leads up to this -- these crises.

15 And I think we really need to -- we do  
16 need to look at the big picture unapologetically.

17 And I would really -- you know, there was  
18 a comment -- I can't remember who made it -- but,  
19 yeah, it would be amazing if we did flip the  
20 language. What would it mean if we went out there,  
21 like, "This is our -- our Founded Loved Indigenous  
22 People," or if we were to do the positive languaging  
23 of this task force's name. I think words hold a lot  
24 of power and intention.

25 And so just know that I carry all --

1 everything I hear today in my heart, and, you know,  
2 with your respect and your permission, I would like  
3 to just process that in the way that I do with words  
4 with prayer. I ask for everyone's prayers for this  
5 task force as we move forward. And, yeah, just like  
6 keep coming to these meetings, please. You're all  
7 really valuable to this. Thank you.

8 MS. BRENDA GONZALES: I also want to thank  
9 everyone for sharing your stories, the resources. I  
10 mean, there was a lot that happened just this  
11 last -- just in a couple of hours. It's very  
12 overwhelming.

13 I started my career in law enforcement  
14 over 16 years ago as a patrol officer and never  
15 imagined I would be sitting where I'm at right now.  
16 And I always think about my job, that I'm dealing  
17 with people on their worst days. And just sitting  
18 down, taking time to listen to people or hear what  
19 they have to say might go a long way.

20 And so I think a lot that I've heard  
21 regarding law enforcement is that communication.  
22 And I just want to say that I'm grateful for, you  
23 know, this task force, and I hope that's something  
24 that we can accomplish is better communications.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. SHARNEN VELARDE: As a social worker  
2 and advocate for domestic violence victims and  
3 sexual assault victims, you know, on a daily basis,  
4 you know, I am right there in the trenches with  
5 them. I understand what they're going through from  
6 the moment that we're called out to the scene, from  
7 the moment we go to court with them to providing  
8 aftercare services to our victims and our survivors.  
9 So I understand. I understand what they go through.

10 And as a domestic violence survivor  
11 myself, you know, this being part of this task force  
12 and the job that I hold and just the position that I  
13 carry is very important to me. It's very endearing  
14 and close to my heart. And I hope that, you know,  
15 the victims that I do serve and being on this task  
16 force, that I can bring more awareness and  
17 prevention to those around me.

18 MS. BERNALYN VIA: Just sitting back and  
19 listening to everyone's concerns and their stories,  
20 it's very sacred, like you said. You know, these  
21 stories are very sacred. And being brought up  
22 traditionally in my community, in Mescalero, you  
23 know, we're so far south from almost everyone.

24 And one of the things that I am very  
25 grateful for as being indigenous we all come from a

1 maternal instinct to where the women are the ones  
2 that carry our families. The women are the ones  
3 that are the core of our being.

4 And so just checking up on one another,  
5 you know, in our communities, asking about our  
6 cousins, asking about, you know, the little ones,  
7 that's how we were taught to handle, you know, where  
8 so-and-so is. If they've gone out to college, we  
9 would like to know that. If they're moved to  
10 another city, we would like to hear that.

11 So I'm just very grateful to everyone who  
12 shared their stories. And I look forward to working  
13 with this task force in providing whatever I can as  
14 far as, you know, reaching out to the communities  
15 and stuff.

16 So thank you very much, you know, from the  
17 Governor's Office in creating this task force here.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. BECKY JOHNSON: I'll just pass it on.

20 MS. LINDA SON-STONE: I want to thank  
21 everybody for sharing their stories and the  
22 information and resources. I'm looking forward to  
23 working with all of the Task Force members, but also  
24 want and hope that we have a continued dialogue;  
25 because, really, your input is going to guide this

1 process. And it's really invaluable for the work  
2 that we're going to be doing here on the Task Force.

3 So I'm really looking forward to working  
4 with all of you. Thank you.

5 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you.

6 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you, Task Force  
7 members, for your comments. We've got a comment in  
8 the back.

9 FROM THE FLOOR: (Native language spoken.)  
10 First, I want to acknowledge the ancestral pueblo  
11 homeland. Second, I want to acknowledge all of you  
12 for doing this important work today. Thirdly, I  
13 want to acknowledge all of our ancestors who are in  
14 the room with us today, especially those of us that  
15 are among our MMIW sisters.

16 I guess two things that I want to focus  
17 on -- and my apologies for showing up late -- but,  
18 specifically, the reason I didn't show up early and  
19 just wanted to attend the last part of the session  
20 is because when I looked at the agenda, I didn't see  
21 any space for people that would have been triggered,  
22 those of us that have gone through the trauma  
23 associated with MMIW.

24 So I didn't see a space for people that  
25 have been triggered to go and process and do

1 healing. So that was a huge reason why I didn't  
2 show up earlier today and I just thought I'll catch  
3 the end of it.

4 That's one of the things I want to focus  
5 on and just have you all consider in moving forward  
6 with the work that you're doing is taking note or  
7 being considerate of those of us that do share  
8 stories or that may be triggered by other stories,  
9 just making sure or evaluating whether or not it's  
10 appropriate to have a safe space in order for people  
11 who are triggered to process their feelings that  
12 are -- that have connected to this space that you  
13 all are bringing.

14 And a good example is I work for the  
15 Tribal Law and Policy Institute. And every year --  
16 every two years we have an Indian Nations  
17 conference. And a big focus is missing, murdered,  
18 indigenous women. And part of the conference, what  
19 we put a huge emphasis on is providing a safe room  
20 for -- for women, for family members that are  
21 triggered during the events or sharing their  
22 stories.

23 And a safe room has proven to be  
24 super-helpful. Actually, this last year, when I was  
25 walking up to my room, the safe room was on the same



1 level. And there was a woman that I met in the  
2 elevator. She was, like, "I need to know where the  
3 safe room is at." And so I pointed her in the  
4 direction of a safe room. She was clearly very  
5 triggered, very emotional.

6 And so she went and went to the safe room.  
7 And afterwards, I also had the opportunity to  
8 interact with her afterwards. And she was, like,  
9 "Thank you for pointing me in the right direction of  
10 the safe room."

11 But I guess the key point I want people to  
12 take away is the fact that we're all on a journey of  
13 healing. We're all on different stages of healing.  
14 And for those of us that have gone through traumatic  
15 situations or paths, we do want to share our  
16 stories. But, oftentimes, again, we're at different  
17 stages, different levels of healing. So sharing our  
18 stories may be quite difficult. And, in order to do  
19 that, providing a safe space might be something that  
20 you all think about.

21 Another -- because of the sensitive nature  
22 of the stories that we do share, another aspect that  
23 I would like you all to think about or consider as a  
24 task force is, through my work in the community, I'm  
25 the founder of a nonprofit called My Native Sisters'

1 Fire. And we focus a lot on indigenous girls and  
2 building [inaudible due to cell phone ringing]. And  
3 so it would be great to see funding -- again, I  
4 don't know what -- what the future of your task  
5 force is going to look like.

6 But it would be great to see funding put  
7 towards, again, prevention, which would include  
8 maybe self-defense classes and other things of that  
9 nature. But, again, beginning to change the  
10 narrative, as the young lady who mentioned over  
11 here, from a negative to a positive, and letting  
12 women, girls, boys in our community see that this  
13 isn't -- this isn't the end-all say-all for our  
14 communities. We can change and we can have a  
15 positive outcome and a positive future.

16 But, again, I just want to thank you all  
17 for doing the important work that you do. And so  
18 thank you for letting me talk, even though I should  
19 have waited.

20 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Thank you. And I  
21 appreciate your comments. And I think one thing  
22 that we can do as a department, is, on the public  
23 notice and agenda, put whether or not there's a safe  
24 room and more advocates or counselors available. I  
25 do want to highlight that throughout our

1 conversation, our main -- I made it aware that we  
2 did have advocates available in the back. And we  
3 definitely want to make sure that -- moving forward,  
4 that we have a safe room.

5 But part of that, also, to help us do  
6 that, it would be helpful if those of you who are  
7 here today, especially organizations who have a  
8 space that can maybe host our future Task Force  
9 meetings where we can incorporate a safe room. We  
10 are limited in resources to, you know, execute this  
11 work and convene the Task Force.

12 So whatever you all are able to help us  
13 with in terms of space and, you know, even providing  
14 refreshment and things like that for community  
15 members who come here, we can work together to make  
16 sure that this is an environment that's safe and  
17 inclusive so everyone can participate then we really  
18 would appreciate that. Just come speak to one of  
19 the Department staff who is here, and we can reach  
20 out to you to coordinate some efforts with you all.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: Are you looking for  
22 hosting meetings in different parts of the state so  
23 various voices can be represented?

24 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Absolutely, yes.  
25 That actually brings me to my next point, the work.

1 One of the Task Force members mentioned we've got a  
2 lot of work to do. We need to put in the action  
3 right now.

4 So all the conversation that we've had  
5 today is really going to help us move forward to  
6 make some next steps. And those next steps are, we  
7 want to formulate some subcommittees within the Task  
8 Force.

9 We want some folks to focus on the data  
10 gathering.

11 We want some folks to focus on the  
12 outreach that needs to happen, and also the  
13 community and stakeholder involvement so we can do  
14 this work.

15 So the Department staff and Secretary will  
16 be working with the Task Force to really finalize  
17 those subcommittees and form them, and also put  
18 together a calendar when the next couple of Task  
19 Force meetings will be taking place and just kind of  
20 an action plan on how we plan to execute our goals  
21 here.

22 And so -- but one thing I do want to say,  
23 just from my experience doing this work, as we meet,  
24 we are going to continue to refine in scope the work  
25 that we are ultimately going to be producing at the

1 end of this. And so just want to put this out  
2 there. Where we are now may look a little different  
3 where we get to by the end of this. So just be  
4 mindful of that.

5 So before we wrap up, I would like to  
6 introduce Representative Andrea Romero, who was one  
7 of the main sponsors of the House Bill 278, which  
8 created this Task Force.

9 REPRESENTATIVE ROMERO: And thank you all  
10 so much for spending your time with us today. It  
11 was such an honor to be the lead sponsor in House  
12 Bill 278, which convened this today. And I just  
13 wanted to give -- if you don't know the background  
14 of this bill, I'm in my first year in office. I  
15 just had my one-year anniversary.

16 And because of the support of our  
17 indigenous communities in my local area, I have the  
18 honor of representing four pueblos, Pojoaque, Nambe,  
19 San Ildefonso, and Tesuque Pueblo.

20 This piece of legislation was actually  
21 brought to me by a constituent who's in the room --  
22 if I can, Chappy, give a wave -- who actually  
23 brought this to my attention as a first-time  
24 legislator, saying, "We need to do something. What  
25 can we do?"

1           This was weeks before the Session. These  
2 things can work very quickly and with the right  
3 energy and with the right folks that have the  
4 wherewithal to want to do this.

5           I could not have come up with this by  
6 myself, nor my co-sponsors who were so passionate  
7 about this getting it through the Session.

8           So please continue to talk to your elected  
9 officials. Make sure that they are involved in this  
10 process, that they know what your interests and  
11 issues are.

12           I just want to honor all of the people who  
13 have given their time today. These are volunteers  
14 on this task force today, everyone in the room, I  
15 know. Thank you so much for taking the time to be  
16 here to talk about those issues and contributing  
17 your time and energy and effort to this.

18           And, again, to those that are going to sit  
19 on this task force, thank you for your time and  
20 commitment to seeing this through to the end. This  
21 is not going to be easy. And for those that did  
22 share their stories, I want to thank you for giving  
23 space to your stories, that this is not -- that this  
24 is a place where your voices will be heard.

25           And I want that to be very, very much

1 honored in this process, that that is absolutely why  
2 we run for office, why we're part of these task  
3 forces, because we just don't want to see these  
4 things lost anymore. And that's why I'm here.

5 That's why I'm so grateful to be able to  
6 have this. And I just want to thank every single  
7 person for giving that time and effort and for the  
8 Task Force and for the Department and all that  
9 you've done to really create this space.

10 I had nothing to do with this. The  
11 Department has done all of this incredible work  
12 outside of this legislative process. But if you  
13 have other pieces of interest and information, this  
14 is step one of so many.

15 And to continue to involve your elected  
16 officials locally, the state level, we work for you.  
17 We are here in order to be able to represent your  
18 interests and to make sure that your communities are  
19 well-served. So if there's anything that I can do  
20 to continue to move this effort forward, please,  
21 this is just one of many, many steps that we can  
22 take.

23 And so I just want to say thank you to  
24 everybody again, and it's an honor to be here.

25 MS. SAMANTHA WAULS: Before we close out,

1 I want to have Secretary close us out, I do want to  
2 highlight that we have feedback forms in the back.  
3 So if you would like to share your input and ideas  
4 or your information about how you can collaborate  
5 with the Task Force so we can continue our efforts,  
6 that would be extremely beneficial to us.

7 We want to make sure that this space is  
8 productive and that it is safe and that we are doing  
9 meaningful work. So your feedback is really --  
10 what's the word I'm looking for? -- appreciated.  
11 Yeah, we definitely want it.

12 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you, Samantha.  
13 And I think what I want to do now at this time is  
14 call Beata Tsosie up here. The way that we began  
15 today opening up in prayer, we'll close today in  
16 prayer. And so if she could come up and honor us  
17 with that.

18 (Closing prayer conducted.)

19 SECRETARY TRUJILLO: Thank you. Thank  
20 you, everyone. I hope that you have a safe journey  
21 to where you came from.

22 (Proceedings concluded at 4:38 p.m.)  
23  
24  
25



1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
2 INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT  
3 MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN TASK FORCE  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

10 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

11 I, Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR, CCR #219, Certified  
12 Court Reporter in the State of New Mexico, do hereby  
13 certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true  
14 transcript of proceedings had, held in the State of  
15 New Mexico, County of Bernalillo, in the matter  
16 therein stated.

17 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
18 hand on December 4, 2019.

19  
20  
21 *Cynthia Chapman*

22 Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
23 BEAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

24 Job No.: 3071N  
25 Proofed by: KW

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 820-6349

**BEAN  
& ASSOCIATES, Inc.**  
PROFESSIONAL COURT  
REPORTING SERVICE

MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com