

## **STAFF REPORT**

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 19-4992, FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
PROCLAIMING MAY 5, 2019 AS A DAY OF AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND  
MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN

---

Date: April 25, 2019

Department: Council Office

Meeting Date: May 2, 2019

Prepared by: Roger Gonzalez,  
[roger.gonzalez@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:roger.gonzalez@oregonmetro.gov), 503-  
797-1746

Presenter: Roger Gonzalez

Length: 10 minutes

---

### **ISSUE STATEMENT**

Murder is the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women. As of 2018, there exists no database system in the United States to track how many Indigenous women have been abducted or murdered.

The Metro Council has an opportunity to stand with other tribal, local, regional, state, and national governments and organizations in honoring May 5, 2019 as a Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Consideration of and vote on Resolution No. 19-4992.

### **IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES**

- 1) Renewing the Metro Council's proclamation related to a Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.
- 2) Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:
  - a. "Metro and other public agencies recognize that racial equity is a cornerstone of good governance to ensure the success of everyone, especially historically marginalized communities, by working together to end the avoidable inequities that prevent the realization of an individual's full potential and are detrimental to us collectively." (Page 13)
  - b. "By addressing the barriers experienced by people of color in the Portland metropolitan region, we will effectively also identify solutions and remove barriers for other disadvantaged groups. The result will be that all people in the region will experience better outcomes." (Page 52)
- 3) Support for HB 2625, which was approved at Council work session on April 23, 2019.

## **POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER**

Council approval of this resolution will further its support for passage of HB 2625 and demonstrate Metro's continued commitment to advance racial equity.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends the Metro Council adopt Resolution No. 19-4992.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

### **1. Known Opposition/Support/Community Feedback**

None known at this time. The City of Portland and Multnomah County will also consider proclamations related to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

### **2. Legal Antecedents**

Resolution No. 18-4891

### **3. Anticipated Effects**

May 5, 2019 will be honored as a Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in the Portland region.

### **4. Financial Implications**

None.

## **BACKGROUND**

According to the Urban Indian Health Institute's 2018 report, *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls: A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States*, of the 5,712 reports of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls in 2016 only 116 cases were logged in the US Department of Justice's federal missing persons database. This same report noted that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that murder is the third-leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women and that rates of violence on reservations can be up to ten times higher than the national average.

A recent primer on missing and murdered Indigenous women by Luhui Whitebear highlighted when compared to the national averages Indigenous women are:

- 2.5 times more likely to be assaulted;
- 2 times more likely to be stalked;
- 5 times more likely to experience interracial violence;
- 10 times more likely to be murdered (on some reservations);
- More than 1 in 3 Indigenous women will be raped in her lifetime; and
- 6 in 10 Indigenous women will be physically assaulted.

There remains insufficient data on the total number of missing Indigenous women in the United States. Based on the Urban Indian Health Institute's report, "reasons for the lack of quality data include underreporting, racial misclassification, poor relationships between law enforcement and American Indian and Alaska Native communities, poor record-

keeping protocols, institutional racism in the media, and a lack of substantive relationships between journalists and American Indian and Alaska Native communities” (pg. 4).

HB 2625, sponsored by Representative Tawna Sanchez (Oregon House District 43), would direct the Department of State Police to study how to increase criminal justice and investigative resources towards future and past cases of missing and murdered Native American women in Oregon.

In 2018, the Metro Council passed Resolution No. 18-4891 proclaiming May 5, 2018 as a Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Urban Indian Health Institute’s 2018 report *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls: A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States*; #MMIW: A Primer on *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women*; HB 2625 Fact Sheet; Resolution No. 18-4891