



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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16th Annual Government-to-Government Violence Against Women Tribal Consultation

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Last Friday, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) hosted a teleconference consultation on behalf of the U.S. Attorney General. As an office in the U.S. Department of Justice, it is exploring ways to implement a new pilot program that would provide grants to victim service providers, tribal organizations, and other possible entities that provide flexible financial assistance to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

“When we talk about victims and these crimes, we also want to address the fact that this is an act of violence, so there needs to be a cycle of healing that is provided to survivors in the case of another incident, we are able — as a nation — to act quickly,” said Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Cove, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Red Valley Tse’alnaozt’i’i, Sheepsprings, Beclabito, Gadiiahi/To’Koi). “We need to be flexible to the unique needs of these victims and survivors of violence so that we may begin building up needed long-term healing.”

The objective of the grant program is to allow OVW recipients greater flexibility to meet the needs of survivors, which are defined by the survivors themselves. Although several OVW grant programs support shelter and transitional housing, none provide cash assistance to keep victims in their homes and even fewer pay for housing-related costs such as utilities, furniture, and household supplies.

“There is a clear need for financial assistance for these victims, survivors and their families as the Navajo Nation does not have the type of resources that are required to accommodate these victims’ needs,” said Delegate Crotty. “There are increased transportation expenses due to the large geographic areas and multiple jurisdictions of the Navajo Nation... in my community, it would take me 70 miles or 140 miles round-trip to get access to an examiner or any type of trauma services at this time.”

The OVW is seeking tribal input on identifying victim needs to establish how much flexibility survivors will have with spending the funds, input on what financial controls should be imposed on the pilot program, and about how to fund the program itself.

Members from the Navajo Nation, Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Menominee Indian Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, and the Association of Village Council Presidents of Alaska provided testimony to OVW.

Testimonies exemplified similar concerns regarding flexibility of funding, lack of criminal justice services, access to public safety officers, inconsistencies with persecution of perpetrators and community resources for victims of violence against Indigenous women.

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“It is a new day, a new beginning, a new chance for positivity. With my offering of corn pollen this morning, we put that into prayer for all our relatives,” said Delegate Crotty. “We also pray for resilience for those who have been inflicted by that pain and continue to be triggered by their experiences.”

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