

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE NAVAJO NATION TAKE
3 PROACTIVE STEPS TO PROTECT CHILDREN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF
4 VIOLENT CRIME AND TO HOLD THE PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE.

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6 WHEREAS, sexual violence against children is horrendous
7 and all too common in the Navajo Nation; and

8 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation council has created the
9 Naabik'íyáti' sexual assault prevention subcommittee to
10 address this issue; and

11 WHEREAS, the subcommittee found that Navajo police
12 receive an average of six reports of rape per week; and

13 WHEREAS, twenty-two percent of Navajo children receiving
14 health services were seen for sexual abuse or assault; and

15 WHEREAS, it is estimated that one in four Navajo
16 children have experienced some form of sexual abuse; and

17 WHEREAS, many of these crimes go uninvestigated, and
18 when they are investigated, they are often referred to
19 federal courts for prosecution, where conviction rates are
20 extremely low; and

21 WHEREAS, the trauma from abuse lives on in the victims
22 of these terrible crimes; and

23 WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences have been shown
24 to have long-lasting effects in many aspects of a person's
25 life; and

1 WHEREAS, the cost of those effects is not only felt by
2 the victims but also by their families and entire
3 communities; and

4 WHEREAS, there are also economic costs that can be
5 attributed to those crimes; and

6 WHEREAS, these crimes and the lack of accountability for
7 them contribute to a public health and safety epidemic in the
8 Navajo Nation; and

9 WHEREAS, as these crimes persist, one-fourth of Navajo
10 youth consider suicide; and

11 WHEREAS, there are few resources on the Navajo Nation
12 that are dedicated to addressing sexual violence against
13 children; and

14 WHEREAS, the frequency of these crimes and the low
15 conviction rates create ongoing trauma for the victims, who
16 often continue to live in the same communities as the
17 perpetrators; and

18 WHEREAS, despite the work of the Naabik'íyáti' sexual
19 assault prevention subcommittee, much work remains to be done
20 to address the epidemic of sexual violence against children
21 on the Navajo Nation; and

22 WHEREAS, these crimes often go unreported or are
23 reported years after the crime occurred; and

24 WHEREAS, even when these crimes are reported, the
25 federal and Navajo statutes of limitations for these crimes

1 are three and two years, respectively, from the occurrence of
2 the crime; and

3 WHEREAS, there is a nationwide movement that is gaining
4 momentum in the fight to remove criminal statutes of
5 limitations for child sex abuse cases;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
7 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the United States and the Navajo
8 Nation be requested to take proactive steps to protect
9 children who are victims of violent crime and to hold the
10 perpetrators accountable; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the
13 president of the Navajo Nation and the speaker of the Navajo
14 Nation council. _____

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