

HOUSE BILL 588

P1

6lr2476

By: **Delegates Hill, Acevero, Feldmark, Fennell, Guzzone, Lehman, Moreno, Smith, Watson, and Wu**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native Women and Girls –**
3 **Day of Awareness and Reporting Requirement**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor to annually proclaim a certain day as Missing
5 and Murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native Women and Girls Awareness
6 Day; requiring the Department of State Police to report to the General Assembly on
7 certain information by a certain date; and generally relating to Missing and
8 Murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native Women and Girls Awareness Day.

9 BY renumbering

10 Article – General Provisions
11 Section 7–410 through 7–421
12 to be Section 7–411 through 7–422, respectively
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to

16 Article – General Provisions
17 Section 7–410
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 Preamble

21 WHEREAS, More than four in five American Indian and Alaskan Native women
22 have experienced violence, and more than one in two have experienced sexual violence; and

23 WHEREAS, According to the National Congress of American Indians, American
24 Indian and Alaskan Native women and girls experience rates of violence up to 10 times

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



greater than the national average, and are less likely, compared to other racial groups, to receive needed services when victims of violence; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaskan Native women and girls experience violence perpetrated by, most commonly, non-American Indian and non-Alaskan Native individuals, which contrasts with other groups where the majority of violence is committed against members of the same race; and

WHEREAS, There continues to be specific failures in reporting and prosecutions for violence against American Indian and Alaskan Native women and girls at the federal, state, and local level; and

WHEREAS, According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center, the number of reported cases of missing American Indian and Alaskan Native women and girls has gradually increased from 5,203 in 2021 to 5,487 in 2024; and

WHEREAS, The data available from official resources is widely considered to be undercounted due to known issues with data collection, racial misidentification, and jurisdictional complexities; and

WHEREAS, The 2020 Census counts approximately 2% of the population of this State, or over 120,000 individuals, identify as American Indian and Alaskan Native; and

WHEREAS, The State must stand in solidarity with the victims and survivors of violence, raise public awareness, and improve reporting mechanisms to address the crisis of violence against American Indian and Alaskan Native women and girls that persists in the State, country, and continent; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That Section(s) 7-410 through 7-421 of Article – General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 7-411 through 7-422, respectively.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – General Provisions

7-410.

THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM MAY 5 AS MISSING AND MURDERED AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKAN NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS AWARENESS DAY.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December 1, 2026, the Department of State Police shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on:

1 (1) whether State and local law enforcement agencies are sufficiently
2 collecting data on violence against American Indian and Alaskan Native individuals in the
3 State; and

4 (2) any policy recommendations for:

5 (i) improving data collection methods for tracking and monitoring
6 incidents of violence against American Indian and Alaskan Native individuals in the State;

7 (ii) improving coordination with federal law enforcement agencies
8 during investigations into incidents of violence against American Indian and Alaskan
9 Native individuals in the State; and

10 (iii) raising public awareness of violence experienced by American
11 Indian and Alaskan Native individuals, particularly women and girls.

12 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
13 1, 2026.