

Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Dr. Yang Yu, Commission Chair
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House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
The Honorable Melissa Wells, Chair
The Honorable Ken Kerr, Vice Chair

March 17, 2026

**FAV | HB 588 – Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaskan
Native Women and Girls - Day of Awareness and Reporting Requirement**

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Governor's Commission on the Asian Pacific American Affairs (APAA), we are writing to express our strong support for HB588, which requires the Governor to annually proclaim May 5th as Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native Women and Girls Awareness Day. This legislation also requires the Department of State Police to report specific data to the General Assembly.

Our Commission believes this legislation is an important step toward raising public awareness about the violence experienced by Indigenous and Native American women and girls. Recognizing this day of awareness helps bring visibility to an issue that has too often been overlooked and encourages continued dialogue, prevention efforts, and accountability.

HB 588 also strengthens efforts to improve data collection by requiring the tracking, monitoring, and reporting of relevant information. Currently, data related to Native American communities in Maryland often lacks the specificity needed to fully understand the scope of these challenges and to inform effective policy responses.

Thank you for sponsoring HB 588 and for your leadership in ensuring that the voices and experiences of Native women and girls are recognized. We appreciate your consideration of our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Yang Yu, Chair, Governor's APAA Commission

Commissioner, Young Smith, Legislation Committee Chair, Governor's APAA Commission