



Testimony of Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
House Committee on Judiciary
Public Hearing – HB 4102
February 1, 2022

Good afternoon. My name is Corinne Sams. I am an elected member of the Board of Trustees of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

We urge your support for HB 4102 to create a Tribal Liaison position within the Department of State Police and ensure officers are trained to investigate and report cases involving missing or murdered indigenous persons.

In 2019, the Legislature passed HB 2625, which directed the Oregon State Police to conduct a study focused on increasing and improving the reporting, investigation, and response to incidents involving Missing and Murdered Native American Women. A multi-disciplinary Missing and Murdered Native American Women Work Group was established that included two representatives from CTUIR.

The Work Group identified barriers to reporting of missing Native American women including crime data and information sharing issues, confusing processes and communication breakdowns, and a lack of trust between Native American communities and state law enforcement.

Among the recommendations to address these core issues was collaboration and partnership to work across jurisdictions, strengthen partnerships between law enforcement and Native American communities, and education for Oregon's law enforcement officers covering MMIW issues.

HB 4102 begins to address the barriers identified by the Work Group and to implement some of its recommendations. A Tribal Liaison would be a point of contact for all tribal nations and indigenous persons and would have the duty to propose modifications to department policies and procedures. This will likely go a long way to improve cross jurisdictional collaboration and strengthen partnerships.

And finally, the DPSST (Department of Public Safety Standards and Training) requirement to educate law enforcement officers on MMIW issues could help to ultimately resolve cases and bring women home safely.

For these reasons the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation strongly urge you to support HB 4102.

Thank you for your time and consideration.