

Submitter: Whitney Watson
On Behalf Of: Future Generations Collaborative
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3198

February 4th, 2025

Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

Re: HB 3198 - Relating to Missing and Murdered Indigenous People

Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary. For the record my name is Whitney Watson. I am Iñupiaq from the Native Village of Kotzebue and Mexican on my maternal side and a descendant of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa and the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska on my paternal side. I currently serve as the Policy Mode Lead for the Future Generations Collaborative, a collective impact partnership between Native-serving and Native-specific organizations, institutions, governments, and community members.

I am writing in support of HB 3198, which directs the Department of Justice to study Missing and Murdered Indigenous People and to report its findings to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to public safety.

This amendment directs the Oregon Health Authority to dedicate staff to addressing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People epidemic in Oregon through providing:

- Victim services and outreach
- Development of interagency agreements with Tribal governments
- Maintenance of data on Missing and Murdered Indigenous people in this state
- Collaboration with representatives of the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon to implement community education and support youth engagement initiatives.

The Future Generations Collaborative supports this bill because we directly see the impacts of the MMIP epidemic in our community. The State of Oregon has an opportunity to actively engage in addressing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People epidemic, and foster intergenerational healing that will last for generations. On behalf of the Future Generations Collaborative, I urge you to vote yes on HB 3198.

Respectfully,
Whitney Watson

Policy Mode Lead