



Sierra Wessel | *President*

Tia Luger | *Vice President*

Tanner Veo | *Secretary/Treasurer*

Na-Ja J. Marshall | *Sergeant-At-Arms*

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Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for North Dakota House Bill 1535, which aims to establish and improve the Feather Alert notice system and amend section 54-35-23 of the North Dakota Century Code relating to the Committee on Tribal and State Relations. This bill is an essential step toward ensuring the safety and well-being of Indigenous communities in North Dakota, and I believe it is critical to the protection of vulnerable individuals across our state.

The Feather Alert notice system, as proposed in HB 1535, would serve as a vital tool in locating and safely recovering missing Indigenous persons, particularly women and children. The tragic and disproportionate rates of missing Indigenous individuals in our country, including here in North Dakota, make it imperative that we take action to address this issue. Implementing a statewide alert system tailored to Indigenous communities will help raise awareness, expedite responses, and engage both state and tribal law enforcement in a coordinated effort to locate and return missing persons more effectively.

Additionally, the bill's proposed amendments to the Committee on Tribal and State Relations will further strengthen communication and collaboration between state and tribal authorities. This is essential for ensuring that the needs and concerns of Indigenous communities are properly addressed, and that both parties are working together in the best interest of public safety.



As a Student Government Member for the Tribal College Sitting Bull College, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by Indigenous communities when it comes to the reporting and resolution of missing persons cases. HB 1535 offers a solution that will not only enhance the safety of our Indigenous neighbors but also foster greater trust and cooperation between tribal and state entities.

By supporting this bill, we can send a strong message that North Dakota stands with its Indigenous communities, prioritizing their safety and ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, have the protection they deserve. I urge the committee to support House Bill 1535 and move it forward for passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm Regards,

Sierra Wessel | *President*

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