



# **TURTLE MOUNTAIN BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS**

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## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF TO HB 1535

Date of Hearing: March 27, 2025

TMBCI Tribal Chairman

Jamie Azure,

4180 Hwy 281, Belcourt ND 58316

Committee chair and members of the committee, my name is Jamie Azure and I am the Tribal Chairman of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. I would like to thank you for allowing this time for myself and others to speak on behalf of an extremely important subject today. I speak today in support of House Bill 1535.

I support this bill with a more important title than Tribal Chairman. I am a father of two beautiful, amazing teenage daughters. It breaks my heart knowing that many parents across Native Nation suffer with not knowing the fate of their children who are missing or without closure.

For decades, Native American and Alaska Native communities have struggled with high rates of assault, abduction, and murder of tribal members. Unfortunately, not all crimes are reported yet the statistics are high for MMIW.

- Nationally, Native Women are more than twice as likely to be raped or sexually abused assaulted than any other group of females.
- On some reservations, Native women are murdered at more than ten times the national average.
- Nearly one in three Native American Women will experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetime.

These facts I've mentioned today are alarming. We need to do better. A feather alert will work. Data does matter. The lives of all people matter. We will make a difference when these resources and more work together with the common goal of saving lives.

Support for HB 1535 is important because it addresses the critical issue of high rates of assault, abduction, and murder among Native American and Alaska Native communities. The bill aims to improve resources to Native Communities. By supporting this bill, the goal is to save lives, provide closure for affected families, and ensure that the lives of Native lives are protected and valued.

I humbly ask the committee to support HB 1535

Respectfully, Chairman Jamie Azure, 4180 Hwy 281, Belcourt ND 58316

