

# TIMELINE: SIGNS OF SOCIAL CHANGE FOR SAFETY OF NATIVE WOMEN 1977-2017

## 1977

- The White Buffalo Calf Woman Society established the first and at that time only domestic violence shelter in Indian Country on the Sicangu Lakota Reservation in South Dakota.
- There are approximately 89 domestic violence shelters in the U.S.

## 1978

- The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights commissions Battered Women: Issues of Public Policy, a document created by activists that compiles 700 pages testimony. It examines need for federal role in domestic violence. Tillie Black Bear testifies on wife beating regarding domestic violence committed against Native women.
- The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is founded. Tillie Black Bear, Sicangu Lakota serves as a founding mother & board member.
- The South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence is established. It is the only state coalition with Native women as co-founders.
- The first Alaska Native Village shelter, the Emmonak Women's Shelter is founded in Yukon Delta Region.

## 1984

- The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is authorized, providing federal funding for first time for victims of domestic violence and their children.

## 1987

- NCADV designates October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

## 1990

- Senator Joe Biden introduces the first version of Violence Against Women Act to Senate. Native women were involved in this initiative and continue to be.

## 1991

- American Indians Against Abuse is incorporated as the first tribal coalition representing all 11 tribes of Wisconsin.

## 1994

- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against women adopted during a Special Session of General Assembly of Organization of American States.
- VAWA is reintroduced in Congress and enacted and signed into law on September 13th by President Bill Clinton.
- Domestic Violence Resource Network (DVRN) is funded by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - grew to include 2 national resource centers, 4 special issue resource centers, 3 culturally-specific Institutes & National Domestic Violence Hotline.
- South Dakota took the marital rape exemption out of rape law.

## 1995

- Department of Justice creates the Violence Against Women Grants Office to implement VAWA grant programs and the Violence Against Women Policy Office.
- UN's fourth World Conference on Women is held in Beijing, China. The Beijing Declaration included goal to "prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls."

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# 1999

- US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: American Indians and Crime: 1992-96 Report is issued. It is the first report to explicitly study violence against Native people and Native women.

# 2000

- VAWA is reauthorized & signed into law. It creates first federal funding for Tribal Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Coalitions.
- Approximately 2,000 domestic violence shelters in the U.S.

# 2003

- The National Congress of American Indians establishes National Task Force on Violence Against Native Women.

# 2005

- VAWA is reauthorized (signed into law by President G.W. Bush, Jan. '06) Includes the first title dedicated to the Safety of Indian Women.
- Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women survey finds there are 30 domestic violence shelters in Indian Country, about one-third are in SD.

# 2006

- The Native Women's Society of the Great Plains is established through OWW funding by Cangleska, Inc., Pine Ridge Reservation, SD.

# 2007

- Coalition of indigenous organizations & individuals submits report to UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on US obligations to indigenous peoples, notes Native women are victims of domestic & sexual violence at a much higher rate than any other group, most assailants are non-Indians & current criminal jurisdictions impedes ability of Indian nations to protect their citizens. US ratified International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1994.
- U.N. General Assembly adopts UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with four countries opposing the Declaration, including the United States.

# 2008

- Delegation of Native women leaders attend CERD in Geneva to highlight shocking rates of violence against Native women in the US, and failure to provide basic law enforcement services in many Native communities.
- CERD issues Concluding Observations and Recommendations, expressing concern about the high incidence of violence experienced by American, Indian and Alaska Native women and urging the US to increase prevention & punishment.

# 2010

- President Obama announces the US support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration affirms indigenous rights, including the rights of Native women to gender equality, security of the person and access to justice.
- Tribal Law and Order Act is signed by President Obama. Specifically, the law enhances tribes' authority to prosecute and punish non-Indian domestic violence criminals..."

# 2011

- The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center is founded and funded as the Native specific member of the Domestic Violence Resource Network (DVRN).
- UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, visits the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Recommends to UN how US should remedy violence against Native women, including restoring tribal authority over all perpetrators who commit sexual or domestic violence on tribal lands.
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights holds a first-ever thematic hearing in Washington, DC, on violence against Native women in US.

# 2011

- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issues landmark decision in *Jessica Lenahan (Gonzales) v. United States*, the first women's human rights case involving domestic violence brought against the United States. Commission found US violated its obligations under international human rights laws by failing to protect Ms. Lenahan and her daughters from violence by her estranged husband.
- The NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Native Women, Sacred Circle & Indian Law Resource Center submit comments to State Department on violence against native women to inform how US next report to CERD should include compliance.
- The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs holds a hearing on "Setting the Standard: Domestic Policy Implications of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."
- Senate Committee Indian Affairs Chairman Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) introduces S. 1763, the Stand Against Violence and Empower Native Women (SAVE Native Women) Act.
- Congress fails to reauthorize VAWA and remained expired for over 500 days due in part to opposition to restoring limited criminal jurisdiction to Indian Tribes over non-Indians committing domestic violence, dating violence & violating orders of protection on tribal lands.
- A Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples conducts first mission to US and issues a report to UN Human Rights Council on alarmingly high rates of violence against Native women and recommending that the US Congress place immediate priority on legislation such as VAWA.
- The UN General Assembly adopts a resolution calling for organization of a high-level plenary meeting to be known as World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, held September 2014 in New York.

# 2013

- Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes, and Consequences and James Anaya, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, emphasize need for tribal provisions that would enhance protections for Native American and Alaska Native women & call on the US to reauthorize VAWA.
- The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues releases documents, including study on the extent of violence against indigenous women and girls related to UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- President Obama signs into law the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, restoring limited criminal jurisdiction in Indian Country in cases of domestic violence and other important amendments.

# 2016

- United States Supreme Court affirms constitutionality of Federal Government's reliance on the existence of prior Tribal Court convictions to create federal criminal jurisdiction over a repeat offender's third assault on a Native woman. The Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Bryant* upholds the constitutionality of the Habitual Offender Provision of VAWA.
- Supreme Court Affirms Tribal Court Jurisdiction Over Dollar General Corporation: upholds tribal civil jurisdiction over non-Indians who sexually assault Native children on tribal lands.
- U.S. Supreme Court affirms federal firearm prohibition, prohibits an individual convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from possessing a firearm, regardless of whether the underlying crime of domestic violence was committed with knowing, intentional, or reckless intent.
- International experts explored strategies to end violence against indigenous women and girls at Key Parallel Event at UN Commission on Status of Women at the United Nations chapel in New York City for Together We Are Stronger: Indigenous Women's Movements to End Violence Against American Indian, Alaska Native, and Aboriginal Women.

# 2017

- Strong Hearts Native Helpline was founded in March of 2017 as a result of discussions that began in 2012 between the NIWRC and the National Domestic Violence Hotline, with input from tribal leaders, a Native women's council, domestic violence experts, and the FVPSA program.