Urgent Action Needed on VAWA Tribal Provisions:

Tell Congress to Protect Tribal Victims

Last week, Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA) and some of his Republican colleagues introduced H.R. 6625, the Violence Against Indian Women Act, which contains compromise solutions to help address opponents' constitutional concerns regarding tribal court jurisdiction and move VAWA forward.

CALL:

First, call 888.269.5702 to connect to the Capitol switchboard. Then ask to be connected to your U.S. Representative (www.house.gov). Tell your congressperson to sign on as a co-sponsor or pledge their support for the Issa-Cole § 904 compromise language (HR 6625).

Then, call Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor (also using the number above) and tell them that a final VAWA that does not protect Native women and does not hold perpetrators accountable is unacceptable. Urge them to support the Issa-Cole compromise on tribal provisions (H.R. 6625) and include that language in VAWA so that a final VAWA can move forward to protect all victims

Background:

American Indian and Alaska Native women are abused, raped and stalked at far greater rates that any other population of women in United States – 6 out of 10 will be physically assaulted in their lifetime, and 1 in 3 Native women will be raped. Eighty-eight percent of the abuse against Native women is committed by non-Native men—but we permit this abuse to go unchecked because we do not allow police officers, prosecutors and judges on tribal lands to perform their legal obligations regarding these non-Native men. This is simply unconscionable. Each of us has an opportunity, now, to right this wrong.

As we work to ensure that a VAWA that safely and effectively protects all victims is swiftly passed, advocates at the national level have learned that some Members of Congress continue to resist expanding tribal courts' criminal jurisdiction, as proposed in Section 904. Representatives Issa and Cole have introduced substitute language that would address these constitutional concerns while still giving tribal courts meaningful jurisdiction and opportunity to redress crimes committed on tribal land against Native American women. We, and our tribal colleagues, support Issa-Cole as a reasonable alternative, but we need your action to ensure that Members of Congress also stand behind this proposal.

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