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GENERAL MEMORANDUM 26-034

Introduction of the Native Children's Commission Implementation Act

On July 15, 2026, Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and Brian Schatz (D-HI), Vice Chairman of the Committee, introduced the Native Children's Commission Implementation Act ([S.4976](#)). The legislation would implement many of the recommendations issued by the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children in its [2024 report](#) through amendments to existing federal law that would create or formalize grant programs, advisory committees, pilot programs, and Tribal funding authorities across multiple policy areas.

Title I – Justice for Children, Youth, and Families: Title I focuses on Tribal justice and child welfare by establishing a Tribal Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, requiring a federal study on missing Native American children and youth, permanently reauthorizing the Tiwahe Initiative, and expanding support for services for Native victims of domestic violence. The title also includes provisions intended to address funding disparities affecting Tribes in Public Law 280 states.

Title II – Improving Research and Data: Title II aims to strengthen Tribal participation in federal health research by codifying the National Institutes of Health Tribal Health Research Office and creating programs that look to improve the collection and accuracy of Native maternal and infant health data.

Title III – Improving the Physical and Behavioral Health of Native Children: Title III expands Tribal involvement in federal health policy by codifying multiple Tribal advisory committees, establishing Tribal set-asides within behavioral health block grants, supporting the Tribal perinatal workforce, and authorizing a behavioral health self-governance demonstration program. It also includes studies and initiatives addressing maternal health, behavioral health, and substance use prevention.

Title IV – Environmental Health Protection: Title IV would establish an interagency task force to coordinate federal efforts addressing environmental health threats affecting Native children and integrate environmental health services into Indian Health Service primary care programs.

Title V – Improving Nutrition Programs for Native Children, Youth, and Families: Title V authorizes Tribal pilot projects for Tribes to administer SNAP. It also aims to expand Tribal participation in federal child nutrition programs, including school meal and childcare food programs that incorporate locally sourced and culturally appropriate foods.

Title VI – Addressing Homelessness in Native Communities: Title VI establishes new housing assistance grant programs for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians experiencing or at risk of homelessness while also reducing barriers to Tribal participation in the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Continuum of Care program.

Title VII – Improving the Workforce for Families: Title VII looks to strengthen Tribal workforce and childcare programs and expand the 477 Program, increasing the Child Care and Development Block Grant Tribal set-aside, and establishing an advisory committee on Native early childhood issues.

Title VIII – Education: Title VIII includes provisions that aim to improve Native teacher recruitment, Native language revitalization, culturally appropriate Head Start programs, behavioral health services in Bureau of Indian Education schools, assistance for homeless students, and formula funding for certified Alaska Tribal schools.

Key links include: (1) [press release](#); (2) [section-by-section summary](#); and (3) [bill text](#).

Please let us know if you would like us to assist with a letter of support for this legislation.

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