

Association of Village Council Presidents Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Introduction of Bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA), Includes Alaska Tribal Public Safety Empowerment Subtitle

The Association of Village Council Presidents thanks Senator Lisa Murkowski and her Senate colleagues for introduction of the Bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA). Senator Murkowski is one of the lead sponsors of the bill, which contains a new subtitle, Alaska Tribal Public Safety Empowerment. This subtitle recognizes that Alaska Tribes have inherent civil and criminal jurisdiction over all Indians present within their village boundaries. It also establishes a pilot project for a limited number of Alaska tribes to exercise special criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians for certain crimes occurring within their villages.

There is a clearly documented public safety emergency and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People epidemic in Rural Alaska. This crisis is compounded by the lack of recognition of the authority of Alaska Tribes. In 2016, Public Safety was established as the AVCP Region's top priority, and AVCP is a strong voice to expand public safety resources in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. AVCP has worked closely with our member tribes and sister tribal consortia and organizations across the State to support the Tribal Public Safety Empowerment and VAWA 2022 Reauthorization.

AVCP Chief Executive Officer, Vivian Korthuis, says "The reauthorization of VAWA, especially the inclusion of key tribal provisions, such as the Alaska Tribal Public Safety Empowerment, will enhance our tribes' abilities to protect our communities. This is a crucial step toward ending the law enforcement emergency in Rural Alaska. Thank you, Senator Murkowski and colleagues, for working to protect Alaska Native women and families. This is a step in the right direction and will directly impact our tribal communities in a positive way."

AVCP urges all members of the United States Senate to expeditiously pass VAWA 2022 – Alaska's tribal communities deserve the same level of protections as any other community in the United States.

Click here for a section-by-section analysis of the VAWA 2022 Tribal Title.

For information about AVCP's public safety advocacy, visit our website at <https://www.avcp.org/about-avcp/publicsafety>.

For information about how we support tribal courts, visit our website at <https://www.avcp.org/about-avcp/tribal-justice>.

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For additional information, please contact AVCP Communications Director, Gage Hoffman at 907-543-7308 or email at ghoffman@avcp.org

AVCP is a regional nonprofit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the YK Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River Village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Western Alaska.