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HOUSE BILL 2951

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Representatives McCabe, Gregerson, Stambaugh, Stanford, Walsh, Reeves, Dye, and Barkis

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing services to report and investigate  
2 missing Native American women; creating new sections; and providing  
3 an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that Native American  
6 women experience violence at much higher rates than other  
7 populations. A recent federal study reported that Native American  
8 women face murder rates over ten times the national average. However,  
9 many of these crimes often are unsolved and even unreported because  
10 there are also very high rates of disappearances among Native  
11 American women. Furthermore, there is no comprehensive data  
12 collection system for reporting or tracking missing Native American  
13 women. This gap in reporting and investigation places Native American  
14 women even more vulnerable to violence.

15 The legislature further finds that although violence against  
16 Native American women has been a neglected issue in society, there is  
17 a growing awareness of this crisis of violence against Native  
18 American women, and a recognition of the need for the criminal  
19 justice system to better serve and protect Native American women. The  
20 legislature intends to find ways to connect state, tribal, and

1 federal resources to create partnerships in finding ways to solve  
2 this crisis facing Native American women in our state.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington state patrol must  
4 conduct a study to determine how to increase state criminal justice  
5 protective and investigative resources for reporting and identifying  
6 missing Native American women in the state. The state patrol must  
7 work with the governor's office of Indian affairs to convene meetings  
8 with tribal law enforcement partners to determine the scope of the  
9 problem, identify barriers, and find ways to create partnerships to  
10 increase reporting and investigation of missing Native American  
11 women. Collaboration with tribal governments must be conducted in  
12 respect for government-to-government relations. The state patrol also  
13 must work with the federal department of justice to increase  
14 information sharing and coordinating resources that can focus on  
15 reporting and investigating missing Native American women in the  
16 state.

17 (2) By December 1, 2018, the state patrol must report to the  
18 legislature on the results of the study, including data and analysis  
19 of the number of missing Native American women in the state,  
20 identification of barriers in providing state resources to address  
21 the issue, and recommendations, including any proposed legislation  
22 that may be needed to address the problem.

23 (3) This section expires July 1, 2019.

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