



Dear Partners and Friends,

Two weeks ago, I was directed by Acting Attorney General Monty Wilkinson, a career Justice Department official for whom I have great respect, to resign my position as U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

Heeding this directive, I tendered my resignation to President Biden effective February 27, 2021.

Serving as U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon has been an incredible honor and a highlight of my career. In this role, I have had the distinct privilege to engage with countless colleagues, friends, community members, law enforcement partners, litigants, and others committed to making our communities safer places to live and thrive.

From day one, my goal as U.S. Attorney has been to ask difficult questions, tackle difficult problems, and do so without the influence of politics, public opinion, or pride.

One of my first leadership positions at the U.S. Attorney's Office was serving as the district's Indian Country Assistant U.S. Attorney and Tribal Liaison. I count this experience among the very best and most impactful of my career as a prosecutor.

I have deep respect for the work of tribal law enforcement officers, victim advocates, and other community leaders and am humbled by the many close working relationships and friendships I have as a result of my work in Indian Country.

Shortly after being confirmed as U.S. Attorney in March 2018, I was honored to be asked to serve on the Attorney General's advisory subcommittee on Native American issues. This appointment enabled me to bring the concerns of my tribal brothers and sisters here in Oregon to the [direct attention of national law enforcement leaders and policymakers](#). I believe this opportunity helped to influence Justice Department policies and programs in a way that benefitted tribal communities here in Oregon.

I am exceedingly fortunate to have worked with several of my U.S. Attorney's Office colleagues to greatly expand our Indian Country team and increase our capacity to serve the needs of tribal crime victims throughout the state. In just the past few years, we have added a Tribal Victim Assistance

Specialist and a [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Program Coordinator](#) to work alongside our existing Tribal Liaison attorney position. These two new positions are among the first such positions created by a U.S. Attorney's Office nationwide.

In November 2018, we launched the District of Oregon Indian Country Email Newsletter with the goal of bringing awareness to Indian Country cases and issues addressed by our office; highlight other federal criminal prosecutions and civil litigation in Oregon relevant to tribal partners; share the experiences of tribal crime victims; list significant trainings, events, and funding opportunities; and identify national trends and issues impacting Indian Country in Oregon. I'm proud to report that, as of this week, each edition of our newsletter sent is received by more than 950 subscribers.

In January 2020, with our partners at the Oregon Department of Justice, we issued [joint official guidance](#) for Oregon law enforcement officers, district attorneys, and other public safety partners on the enforcement of tribal protective orders. Failing to recognize and enforce these protective orders was putting Native women vulnerable to human trafficking and other acts of violence at grave risk. This joint official guidance has assisted in broader recognition of tribal sovereignty and the initiation of statewide law enforcement training.

And just this last week, our office issued our first annual [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons program report](#) to provide tribal communities, law enforcement, and the public with an overview of current MMIP cases connected to Oregon and our strategy for the year ahead. This report is the earliest result of our district's effort to focus attention and resources on MMIP issues as part of a [national strategy](#) launched by the Justice Department in November 2019. I'm very excited to track the progress of this program in the months and years to come.

I'm very proud of what we've accomplished together to protect Oregon's tribal communities, but recognize there is still so much work to be done. Native populations in Oregon and throughout the country still suffer from unacceptable and disproportionately high levels of violence. Native American women face particularly high rates of violence, especially from family members or other domestic partners.

Pursuing justice on behalf of tribal communities in Oregon has been and always will be a top priority for the U.S. Attorney's Office. While my time with the Justice Department is coming to an end, this critical work remains in very capable and dedicated hands.

I hope to see many of you again in the future and thank you personally for your dedication and partnership. Until then, I will continue to follow your work and advocate for you at every opportunity.

Be safe and well.

Billy J. Williams

U.S. Attorney

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