

Transmittal Letter to the President and Congress



Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children



Commissioners

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To: The President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate:

Pursuant to the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children authorizing legislation (Public Law 114-244, October 14, 2016, as amended), we are pleased to transmit the official and final Report of the Commission on Native Children. This Report completes Congress' charge to the Commission, and we were honored to be Congress' stewards in listening to Native communities across the country describe their vision of what will support communities, children, and youth into the future. Based on the Commission's hearings, research and study, the Report includes the Commission's recommendations for Federal legislative actions and for administrative policies and practices that will improve the education, child welfare, health and justice outcomes for Alaska Native, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian children and youth. These recommendations are not based on the opinions of individual Commissioners but are offered by the Commission as a whole as the only and exclusive Commission Report; no other report is endorsed by the Commission.

The Commission on Native Children was directed to conduct a comprehensive study of the programs, grants, and supports available for Native children (including American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children, from birth through age 24) and make recommendations about how this overall system could be improved to help Native children thrive. Building on Native values and Native strengths, the Commission offers this report with deep respect for the culture and traditions of Native people, acknowledging that Tribes and Tribal organizations have created successful approaches that can and should be scaled and supported to fulfill their potential. While much of the material in this report is already available elsewhere, the report not only gathers such material together but does so using an expansive approach, to bring into view the connections and crossover issues and solutions among the various disciplines that address endemic and historic issues facing Native children and youth. The Commission is confident that the recommendations presented here will achieve the goals of the legislation and, if implemented, will provide the strategies to transform outcomes for Native children and youth, the hope for our future.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Gloria O'Neill in black ink.

Gloria O'Neill
Chair

Handwritten signature of Tami DeCoteau in black ink.

Tami DeCoteau
Co-Chair