

**STATEMENT
OF
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ASSISTANT DEPUTY DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF JUSTICE SERVICES
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE
HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE UNITED STATES**

July 22, 2020

Good afternoon Chairman Gallego, Ranking Member Cook, and Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Jason O'Neal, I am the Assistant Deputy Bureau Director – Office of Justice Services (OJS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), at the Department of the Interior (Department).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Department regarding H.R. 958, the Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act.

H.R. 958, Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act

H.R. 958, the Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act, amends the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 (25 U.S.C. § 1304) to extend criminal jurisdiction of tribal courts over non-Indians to cover crimes including violence against children committed by their caregivers, and against officers who respond to calls involving the exercise of tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians. H.R. 958 also calls on the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to coordinate with the Attorney General to ensure that Federal programs to support Tribal justice systems and the provision of victim services work together, and that training materials on recognizing and responding to domestic violence are available to the Bureaus that directly serve Indian Country (BIA, Bureau of Indian Education and the Indian Health Service). The Department supports efforts to make Tribal communities safer, including equipping Tribes with additional tools to address criminal offenses occurring within Indian Country.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee to provide technical assistance.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions from the Committee.