

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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## REVISED - THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON NATIVE CHILDREN WILL VISIT UTQIAGVIK AND ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

*The Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on  
Native Children will travel to visit organizations serving  
our youth and ask for testimony on issues that are important  
to protecting Native children*

[Utqiagvik and Anchorage, AK, August 2021]

Congress established the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children in 2016 to understand the unique challenges facing Alaska Native, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian Youth across the nation. Recognizing the diverse perspectives and needs of Native People across the state and nation, the Commission is conducting site visits to work with and hear directly from the communities working in youth intervention. The bipartisan Commission is the vision of former U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) and U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

The Commission will be visiting Utqiagvik virtually to conduct site visits and hear public testimony August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and to Anchorage for site visits and public testimony August 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, to learn from the successes and challenges in supporting our Native children in the key areas of: 1) health, mental health, and behavioral health; 2) education and early childhood development; 3) child welfare, juvenile justice, and violence; and 4) systems innovations and best practices in Native communities.

The Commission will virtually visit Utqiagvik on Tuesday, August 17, 2021, to begin their visit to various organizations that will provide the Commissioners an

opportunity to hear from the individuals running the programs, talk with key stakeholders about the issues that face Native children from birth to age 24, and receive recommendations that are vital to the community. On Tuesday, August 17, 2021, from 6:30 – 8:00 PM Alaska Time, the Commission would like to hear from Native children, their families, tribal leaders, and community members and will accept both oral and written testimony about issues that are important to protecting Native children and recommendations for the Commission to consider including in their final report. The public hearing will be virtually. Written testimony can be submitted in person or sent to [email@commissiononnativechildren.org](mailto:email@commissiononnativechildren.org).

The Commission will host a regional hearing in Anchorage, AK, that is open to the public in-person and virtually. The in-person event will be held at the Marriott Anchorage Downtown, 820 W 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anchorage, August 20 – 21, 2021. To join virtually, please register for each day at [www.commissiononnativechildren.org](http://www.commissiononnativechildren.org). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the hearing. Any person with a disability who desires reasonable accommodation to attend these regional hearings may contact [email@commissiononnativechildren.org](mailto:email@commissiononnativechildren.org).

On Friday, August 20, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Alaska Time, the Commission will hear from respected researchers and experts on various topics that affect Native children. These topics include health, mental health and behavioral health; education and early childhood development; child welfare, juvenile justice and violence; and systems innovations and best practices in Native communities. Due to the amount of time allotted to each panelist, there will be no opportunity to provide any questions from the members of the public.

On Saturday, August 21, 2021, from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Alaska Time, the Commission would like to hear from Native children, their families, tribal leaders, and community members and will accept both oral and written testimony on issues that are important to protecting Native children served in the various communities and recommendations for the Commission to consider including in their final report. The Commission will allot 5-10 minutes to hear from individuals who attend in-person and virtually. Written testimony can be submitted in person or sent to [email@commissiononnativechildren.org](mailto:email@commissiononnativechildren.org). To close the regional hearing, please join the Commission to hear from a guest speaker, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM.

The Commission will integrate the information obtained from the site visits in Utqiagvik and Anchorage into a report for the President of the United States and Congress containing recommendations to address the challenges facing Native children, with the goal of developing a sustainable system that delivers effective, culturally appropriate, meaningful wrap-around services to Native children.

The Commission has an opportunity to fundamentally improve the way we support Native children and communities. By including your voice, we can identify the specific issues communities are facing when serving Native children and make recommendations on how to overcome the inequalities that remain today. As a Commission, we are committed to being a voice for Native children and stand ready to serve as a resource as Congress and the Administration consider future actions to achieve better outcomes for Native children, including: better use of existing resources, increased coordination, measurable outcomes, stronger data, stronger private sector partnerships, and implementation of best practices.



The Commission is inviting any member of the community who would like to share story, recommendations, or any other form of testimony to do so on Tuesday, August 17<sup>th</sup> 2021 from 6:30-8:30 P.M. virtually, and from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 2021 at the downtown Marriott Hotel in Anchorage. You will also be able to testify virtually at both public hearings. The Commission hopes you are able to attend one of these public hearings and be a part of building a future that uplifts and supports the potential of the next generation.

Please follow the Commission on Facebook at: Alyce Spotted Bear & Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, or on Twitter: @asbwscnc.

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***About:** Established by Congress, the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children (Commission), is established as an independent federal entity to conduct a comprehensive study on federal, state, local, and tribal programs and develop recommendations on solutions to issues that would improve the health, safety, and well-being of Native Children.*

