



**For Immediate Release**

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Media Contact: Jason Salsman

[jsalsman@muscogeenation.com](mailto:jsalsman@muscogeenation.com)

### **MCN Statement on the Reauthorization of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**

We are encouraged by the bipartisan progress made toward the reauthorization of VAWA. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation was one of the first tribal nations to implement the expanded jurisdictions set forth in Congress' 2013 reauthorization of VAWA, and we have done so successfully. We have coordinated with state and local officials to prosecute countless perpetrators of domestic violence, and our communities are safer as a result.

This success demonstrates the value of strengthening tribal authority and capacity to enforce the law within our borders. When tribal nations are empowered to bring resources to the fight against crime, share the workload with other agencies, and make our communities safer, everyone benefits. For this reason, we have consistently advocated for further restoration of tribal jurisdiction through VAWA reauthorization and changes to other laws that limit tribal governments' ability to protect public safety.

The current VAWA bill contains historic provisions regarding the scope of tribal criminal jurisdiction restored. For that, we applaud the hard work of both the Judiciary Committee and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for their input.

While we are pleased with the current progress, we have questions about the potential to add habeas corpus provisions to this bill that could establish standards for tribal court convictions separate from those applied to state court convictions. Tribal courts should have simple parity with state courts, and the plain language of VAWA already safeguards defendants' rights under the law.

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