

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0305

October 17, 2018

Attorney General Jeff Sessions
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Sessions,

Thank you for yours and President Trump's efforts to keep all Americans safe. I am particularly grateful that President Donald J. Trump recently signed the *Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act* into law. Congress passed this law by unanimous consent and it will reshape the way Indian Country works to save lives when minutes count the most. As you begin to develop the budget for fiscal year 2020, I urge you to request full funding for the development and implementation of AMBER Alert communication plans in Indian Country.

Ashlynnne Mike was a beautiful 11-year old who lived in the Navajo Nation – the largest Indian reservation in the United States. She was a kindhearted young girl who had enormous potential. After school on Monday, May 2, 2016, while Ashlynnne and her nine-year-old brother Ian played near the local bus stop, a stranger approached them and lured them into his vehicle by offering them a ride home. He abducted the children and took them to a remote part of the reservation where he brutally abused Ashlynnne and left her and her brother to fend for themselves in the desert. Although Ian was able to seek help, Ashlynnne died alone in the desert.

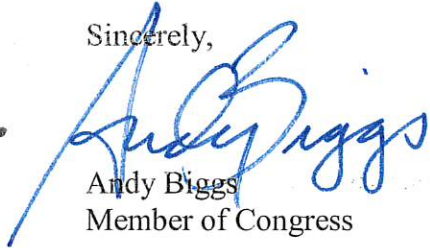
Ashlynnne was abducted around 4:00 P.M. Her father filed a missing person report at 6:53 P.M. – within 3 hours. Unfortunately, due to difficulties with the Navajo's AMBER Alert system, authorities did not send an AMBER Alert until 2:30 A.M. on Tuesday – almost 10 hours after Ashlynnne went missing. Had Indian Country been included as partners in the AMBER Alert plans, law enforcement could have rescued Ashlynnne in time, and she might still be alive today.

This law reauthorizes the Department of Justice (DOJ) grant program that assists state and local governments in developing and implementing AMBER Alert communication plans. It explicitly requires DOJ to perform a needs assessment of AMBER Alert capabilities on Indian reservations. It will also, for the first time, require funds be used to integrate tribal AMBER Alert systems with those of neighboring jurisdictions to ensure that AMBER Alerts reach as many people as possible, as swiftly as possible.

As Congress awaits the needs assessment from DOJ, I respectfully ask that you request full funding for the AMBER Alert in Indian Country communications plans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress