



COALITION to STOP  
VIOLENCE AGAINST  
NATIVE WOMEN



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# New Mexico Legislature Approves the Indian Family Protection Act

*House Bill 135 will limit separation of Native families and keep Native children in their communities*

**Santa Fe, N.M.—** With a (52-12) House vote and a (33 -4) Senate vote, the New Mexico Legislature has passed House Bill 135, the Indian Family Protection Act. The bill now heads to Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham for signature.

HB135 will solidify and expand protections for Native children and families in the child welfare system. This work builds on the [Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978](#). The legislation uplifts tribal sovereignty and tribal self-determination, by ensuring tribal communities are first in deciding how to care for their children in need, without the risk of them being taken away from their community.

New Mexico will have some of the strongest protections in the country.

**The following is a joint statement from Jaqueline Yalch of the New Mexico Tribal Indian Child Welfare Consortium, Angel Charley, executive director of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against native Women, and [Name], [Title] of Bold Futures:**

“Today we applaud the leadership and boldness of the New Mexico Legislature in passing House Bill 135—a historic piece of legislation that prioritizes the well-being of Native children all across New Mexico.

“Keeping Native children in our tribal communities ensures our children are connected to what matters most: our culture, our identity, our history. Keeping our communities together means keeping our communities strong, said Jacqueline Yalch, President of the New Mexico Tribal Indian Child Welfare Consortium.

“During this 30-day legislative session, Indigenous families and leaders have sent a clear message that the protection of Native children's connection to their communities is vital for their, and their communities well being. Ensuring that our Native children remain in their communities is integral to our cultural guardianship, said Angel Charley of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women.

“The journey of creation of IFPA is the culmination of deep intentions, strong advocacy and true partnership. A partnership of Native families impacted by separation, ICWA

workers , advocates, and tribal Governors and Presidents—who came together with one goal—to systemically protect Native children. This is a historic day for New Mexico, said Denicia Cadena Policy Director of Bold Futures.

“This session, the New Mexico Legislature acted swiftly on this huge opportunity to strengthen our codes and practices that will keep our families together, for generations to come—changing legacies of Native child removals by the state.”

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*NMTIC is a consortium of Tribal ICWA field workers providing advocacy, education and collaboration with state agencies to preserve the culture, traditions and identity of all Indian Children. NM TIC works diligently to build meaningful and ongoing relationships with state partners in efforts to implement best practice within state agencies that will best support the work to protect Native children and keep them connected to their family, culture and tribe. The NM Tribal Indian Child Welfare Consortium has representation from all 19 NM Pueblos, 2 Apache Nations, Ramah Navajo and Ysleta del Sur in El Paso, TX.*

*[Bold Futures](#) works to build communities where all have what we need to make real decisions about our own bodies and lives, and all have room to live with respect and dignity.*

*[CSVANW](#) is an award winning organization at the forefront to a dynamic approach to the tribal domestic and sexual violence fields that is demonstrating the most effective, creative and innovative ways to address and prevent the cycle of violence within tribal communities.*