

September 7, 2020

Office of Senator Steve Daines
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Daines,

My name is [INSERT HERE]. I am a resident of [INSERT HERE] and I am writing to demand justice for Kaysera Stops Pretty Places.

On August 24, 2019, Kaysera Stops Pretty Places went missing in a suburban neighborhood of Hardin, Montana, less than a half mile off of the Crow Reservation. On the morning of August 29, her body was found in that same neighborhood. Law enforcement did not inform the family that Kaysera's body had been found until almost two weeks later on September 11.

Days before Kaysera went missing, she filmed and posted to social media the beating of her 15-year-old brother by law enforcement at Crow Fair. The officers beating the minor in a wheelchair included Big Horn County deputies. The U.S. Attorney's Office investigated the incident and officers were reprimanded. There is reason to believe that one of the deputies who was under investigation for the scene filmed by Kaysera was a responding officer when her body was discovered.

The Big Horn County Sheriff's Office mishandled Kaysera's case every step of the way and the FBI continues to sit idly by despite countless pleas for intervention and assistance.

The FBI has a federal trust responsibility and a duty to protect tribal citizens, including Kaysera. When a tribal citizen living on a reservation goes missing and is murdered, the FBI has a trust duty and responsibility to investigate. Here, the FBI stated it would *not* investigate because her body was eventually found half a mile off the Crow Reservation border. Instead of abiding its federal trust duty and responsibility to protect the lives of our Native women and girls, the FBI abandoned its responsibility and claimed it had "no jurisdiction" to investigate this taking of a young girl's life, despite the fact that the FBI knew of *no* evidence to prove her life had not been taken *on* the reservation—where the FBI would have undoubtedly had jurisdiction. To be sure, the fact that the Supreme Court and Congress have created a complex web of jurisdiction for crimes committed in Indian Country is no excuse for the FBI to sit by and do nothing as our girls and women are murdered. The FBI can always investigate the murder of a tribal citizen on or near a reservation. If it turns out the murder occurred off tribal lands, the FBI can turn over the investigation to the property authority to prosecute.

As you may know, in November 2019, Senator Jon Tester sent an inquiry to the FBI regarding its efforts to investigate crimes, specifically Kaysera's case, in Indian Country. It took the FBI 48 days to respond to Senator Tester to justify their continued abdication of its duty to investigate Kaysera's case and instead pass the responsibility of this duty to the Big Horn County Sheriff's Office. Montana is the current epicenter for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women

and Girls. Currently the Sovereign Bodies Institute's database reports 245 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Montana. 20% of these cases are in Big Horn County.

What are you going to do to ensure the FBI can no longer abdicate its trust duties and responsibilities to investigate when Native women and girls residing on tribal lands are murdered? Savanna's Act is a good start, but in the end, if passed into law, an optional protocol will not require the FBI to do its job. Investigating the murders of Native women and girls who reside on reservations should be mandatory, not optional.

What will you do, as a U.S. Senator, to address this? The FBI's failure to abide its federal trust duty is inexcusable and justice must be found for Kaysera and her family.

Sincerely,
[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]