

PRESS RELEASE

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SENATE COMMITTEE PASSES McCAIN BILL TO EXPAND AMBER ALERT SYSTEM ON NATIVE AMERICAN RESERVATIONS

Washington, D.C. – The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs today passed the *AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2017*, legislation sponsored by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) that would expand the AMBER Alert child abduction warning system on Native American reservations by clarifying that Indian tribes are eligible for Department of Justice (DOJ) grants that help assemble AMBER Alert systems for law enforcement agencies.

The DOJ currently operates a pilot program that offers AMBER Alert training services to Native American tribes, but the *AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2017* would make that initiative permanent and enhance DOJ oversight of how the grants are used. The legislation would also reauthorize the DOJ grant program that assists state and local governments in developing and implementing AMBER Alert communication plans. These communication plans are used by law enforcement agencies to expedite child abduction alerts to the public. The bill would also require the DOJ to perform a needs assessment of AMBER Alert capabilities on Indian reservations.

“Last year, Navajo Nation was devastated by the abduction and murder of 11-year old Ashlynnne Mike,” **said Senator McCain**. “In that high profile case, authorities did not issue an AMBER Alert for Ashlynnne until the day after family members reported her abduction. According to data produced by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, there are 7,724 Native American children listed as missing in the United States. I appreciate the committee’s support today and I urge my colleagues in the Senate to quickly pass this much-needed legislation for Indian Country.”

Senator McCain introduced the AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2017 on March 29, 2017. The legislation now moves to the full Senate for a vote on final passage.

The legislation is [here](#).

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