Byron Dorgan: Ladies and gentlemen, if I can have your attention, we are going to begin the hearing this morning. Let me have your attention, please, and ask you to be seated. This is the Attorney General's Advisory Committee on American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence.

And this is the second public hearing that we've held of this advisory committee. My name is Senator Byron Dorgan. And I along with Joanne Shenandoah will be co-chairing the public hearing on the advisory committee today.

The first hearing that we held was in Bismarck, North Dakota, in December, focusing on American Indian/Alaska Native children exposed to violence in the home. Today I'd like to begin the day by introducing you to Councilman Delbert Ray, Sr., who will be providing an invocation. Thank you, Councilman Ray, for being with us today.

And let me ask in the back of the room, if I might, to have quiet while we have the invocation by the councilman.

[BEGIN OPENING INVOCATION AND CULTURAL PRESENTATION]

Delbert Ray, Sr.: If it is your custom to stand. [NATIVE LANGUAGE @ 04:15 to 04:52 – 0211A]

Our heavenly father, we are so thankful for another day of life that you have given us. We thank you for the hearts of compassion for the needs of our children. We thank you for our national leadership.

We thank you for our regional, our state, our local governments, our tribal committees, lord, that have taken on this task of becoming the protectors of our children. Lord, the problem becomes complex.

So we look to you, lord, because you tell us that you're in our yesterdays, you're in our today, and you're in our tomorrow. And as we can look to you for wisdom and guidance, we ask you, lord, even to protect those young ones. The situations they may be going through at this point. The parents, lord, that may be enlightened as to the abuses. The violence that

occurs in their homes have an everlasting effect and the young bodies and the minds of our children.

I thank you, lord, for each one that's sitting up here. Because you've placed it in their heart to make it their responsibility to shine the light on this grave issue. We thank for all these things. Just be in our midst. Give us wisdom. Give us compassion at all levels.

As we go forward from this day, bless all the travelers that are still yet to come and on their way home. Bless their families at home. Our children. All these things I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Byron Dorgan: Councilman Ray, thank you very, very much. We are located today on the Salt River Maricopa Indian Reservation. And I want to especially thank a very strong Indian leader, President Diane Enos, a personal friend for many years. And we wanted to tell you that President Enos and the tribe has very graciously agreed to host several activities associated with this public hearing. We're very grateful to the tribe for that.

And one of the events is next on this agenda to start this hearing. It is *Dancing by the River* from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, which is a traditional dance group. And we thank you for being here and look forward to your presentation.

[DANCE PRESENTATION @ 8:10 to 11:47 – 0211A]

[APPLAUSE]

Byron Dorgan: Well, thank you very much for the *Dancing by the River* dancers from the Salt River tribe. We appreciate it very much.

[APPLAUSE]

[BEGIN WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS]

Byron Dorgan: It was over two decades ago that there was an election on

the Salt River Maricopa Indian reservation. And the voters decided to elect a second-year law student to the tribal council. And that second-year law student became a member of the tribal council, served for many, many years, and then was elected as the 23rd president of the Salt River Maricopa tribe. I present to you a good friend and a great Indian leader, President Diane Enos.

[APPLAUSE]

Diane Enos: [NATIVE LANGUAGE @ 12:53 - 13:02 – 0211A]

What I just said to you was in Piipaash first. "Good morning." And then "It's good to see you." And then in O'odham. "Good morning. It's good to see you." The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community is comprised of two tribes. The O'odham and the Piipaash. On behalf of the people of the community and on behalf of the community council, welcome to the community all of you that are here today, all of you that are participating in this huge event, significant event.

Our ancestors lived here for centuries. The Akimel O'odham were irrigators and ancient farmers, with hundreds of miles of irrigation canals all throughout this valley, all the way toward Gila Bend. We are the descendants of those strong people, who were part of huge trade routes going all the way down into the Mexico, the Gulf of California, and that whole area.

About eight years ago we had a tragedy in this community. Two little children were found, who had been neglected and overlooked and forgotten. In the summer—in the heat of the summer in Arizona, were found in the trunk of a car. They had been dead for a while and suffered horribly.

That was the catalyst, I believe, for us as a community to make changes in the needs of children, the rights of children. And that involves all our systems. Our courts, our police, our child protective services, social services, tribal government ordinances and laws. And in doing this significant, huge work, it's like the layers of an onion. You peel back and find more and more to do.

So the hearings that the Department of Justice has set for children exposed to violence is more closer and closer to the heart of that proverbial onion. We have much more work to do in Indian Country. And nationally as well. So I want to thank you for the partnership with the Department of Justice and the state governments, police, FBI, federal agencies.

We have much more work to do, but let's walk down this path hand in hand and make a stronger future for all of our children in Indian Country. Thank you so much. Enjoy yourself while you're here. The dancers that you just saw here—the young people—are Piipaash. In Americanese, Maricopa. So, again, welcome and thank you for being here.

[APPLAUSE]

Byron Dorgan: President Enos, thank you very, very much. And again, we appreciate the hospitality you have shown this advisory committee. Next we will turn to Kevin Washburn. Kevin is Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior and an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma.

All of us know Kevin and his work and very much appreciate his public service and appreciate him coming here today. Kevin?

Kevin Washburn: Thank you, Senator Dorgan. Thank you, President Enos, for that very inspiring welcome from yourself and members of your community. And thank you, so many friends. Jefferson Keel, my own tribe's lieutenant governor, is here. My own mentor. And so many friends. A lot of you I've known for a very, very long time, and it's really good to see everybody.

I'm Kevin Washburn. I'm the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior. And we have a lot of things on our plate. On our portfolio at the Department of the Interior. And I think I probably don't give enough attention—as much attention as I'd like—to criminal justice issues. Because they're a personal passion of mine. So it's really a great opportunity to get to be here.

And certainly another passion and another—one of the most importance resources and most sacred resources that we have a responsibility for are tribes and Indian families and certainly their children. And it's such a joy to see children carrying our traditions forward, as we began with.

Exposure to violence is not limited to American Indian and Alaska Native children. It affects children from all communities, of course. And it certainly has a unique effect on Native children. I had a chance, when the task force on children exposed to violence was working—doing its work that ultimately produced this task—this advisory committee, I got to address that task force.

And this was back in about 2010. And I was still in academia. And got a chance to go address the task force. And I was a busy law school dean. I didn't really—I just had been told I was going to go speak to a group and I needed to, you know, talk to them about criminal justice in Indian Country.

So I do that fairly regularly, or I used to do that fairly regularly. So I went over and gave my talk. And it was in the back of a restaurant in Albuquerque. Kind of like a Rotary Club meeting, or a Lions Club meeting, or something like that. It was kind of this funny environment. And I didn't really look to see who was on the schedule. I just knew it was a group that was interested in criminal justice and Indian Country issues.

And Sarah Deer, an old friend who's worked in this area a long time, had, I guess, invited me or gotten me on the agenda. And I went over there and I talked a lot about a lot of the dysfunctions in criminal justice in Indian Country, which I've written a lot about in the course of my career as an academic.

I didn't look at the manifest to see who was there. But I started talking about these issues. And I saw a hand go up in the back of the room. And the person with kind of a New York accent said, "Well, if this is dysfunctional—this criminal

justice system is so dysfunctional—on these reservations, I don't know why we gave the Indians these reservations." [LAUGHS]

And I paused for a moment, collected myself, [LAUGHS] and I said, "'Give'?" You know, and we started this very lively discussion about, you know, "How did this all come to be? And let's talk about that." And we had a really, really interesting discussion. I think it ended—you know, I said I think the tribes had real doubts about the sessions they've made to non-Indians that created this system.

From their perspective, that's kind of the issue we have. Why did we cede all this land if it was going to cause all these kind of problems? But at any rate, it was a good discussion and a civil discussion. And I recognized the guy that asked the question, but it turned out it was Joe Torre, the former New York Yankees manager, who was chairing that task force.

So this task force is accustomed to having very illustrious leaders. And they continued that tradition. I'm glad to see that. At the end of the discussion—and later, privately—Joe Torre turned to me and said, "You know, I hadn't really thought about it that way." And it brought to mind a famous Cherokee poet and philosopher named Will Rogers. Something he once said.

He once said, "We're all ignorant. Just in different ways." And it really is true. And I am just as ignorant as anybody else, in different ways. And let me confess some of my own ignorances. I used to be a federal prosecutor in Indian Country. And to be quite honest, prosecuting cases—violent crimes—in Indian Country, I usually focused a heck of a lot on the defendant. And I usually focused a heck of a lot on the direct victim of the offense.

But if someone wasn't actually physically injured in the offense, they didn't get a whole lot of my attention. And this was in the '90s. And I had a lot of cases. I had—well, just a lot of cases. Some of them juvenile cases. A 12-year-old young woman who'd been left in charge of three very young

children. And when the baby wouldn't stop crying after minutes and then hours, she grew very frustrated and she ended up killing the baby, because it was the only way to get the baby to stop crying. She was at her wit's end. And that was a tragic case.

We focused on, you know, the dead infant. And we focused on this 12-year-old girl whose life was never going to be the same and had to go through the juvenile justice process. But we didn't focus on the other two children that were present in that household when that happened. Honestly, I just personally didn't think too much about them. It was—you know, they weren't front and center.

You know, many other cases. I had a case with—where a young 15-year-old young man was raped by his 26-year-old uncle. And there were children in the same household where that happened. And I—you know, it was hard enough as a federal prosecutor. It's hard work when you've got those kinds of cases. And trying to, you know, get a 15-year-old to be able to testify on the stand about, some—you know, the most horrible thing that's ever happened to him in his life—an unthinkable thing—was—you know, that was enough for me.

That was—that fully engaged me. And—but yet, you know, in that case there were others that were affected by that, that didn't get nearly enough attention. So the very existence of this task force and this committee recognizes that there may be people that are bystanders, but that nevertheless are deeply affected by the things that happen.

And your job is to look into that. First to, I guess, address your own ignorance, to the extent there is some. And then to help the rest of us address our ignorance about this problem. It's an all-star cast here, and I'm confident that you will do a very good job of that. And we're lucky to have you on board and working on this very important area.

It's also great to have tribal leaders so engaged. And I want to thank Chairwoman Enos—President Enos—and Lieutenant Governor Keel and others, who are engaged on

this. And the Justice Department has turned out to be a terrific partner. The Justice Department in the last five years has accomplished so much in so many areas of criminal justice in Indian Country.

Bob Listenbee, our director of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, told me he needed to read some of my articles that I've written. Because I've written a bunch of articles that I think only my mother has read. And I said, "I'm not sure you need to." Because the Justice Department and activists—you know, the tribal activists that got—the Tribal Law and Order Act passed and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act passed, a lot of my issues have been addressed.

There's still, of course, a lot more. And you are all focusing on some very important ones. So I'm really grateful for all that and for the leadership of Tony West, who's in a position to do a lot more good at the Department of Justice. So, grateful for all that.

Let me tell you, we have a lot of things on our plate at the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Interior. One of them that's sort of front and center is working to update our child protection handbook. And that's something that will ultimately, we hope, pay some dividends as we—you know, it's an opportunity to ensure that social workers and healthcare providers, law enforcement and courts—those types of people—are using best practices in dealing with issues of child protection.

We've also been working on revisions to our guidelines on the Indian Child Welfare Act. You know, as many of you, the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed in 1978. We produced a set of guidelines around 1979 or 1980 to implement the Indian Child Welfare Act. And then we haven't turned back to that really at all since that time.

And so we are—have got an active group, led by one of my—my senior policy advisor, President Obama's Schedule C employees, Rodina Cave, who's helping us lead that effort to take a look at the child welfare issues. And Gina Jackson,

who's here, has been loaned to us in part by Anita Fineday and her foundation, to help us look at these issues.

And so we're grateful for the contribution of so many. And we believe that we may be able to do some good there. We haven't determined exactly what that is, because we need a lot of input from tribes before we do that.

So I know that today the focus is on detention facilities. Largely juvenile detention facilities. And that's been a real challenge for us, frankly. Most recently the issues that we've been working on with regard to detention facilities and juveniles is how to ensure that the juveniles that are in these facilities are properly educated.

And it's a significant challenge. Not least of which because some children spend a matter of days in a juvenile attention facility. Two days, three days, four days. And some of them spend months and months. And so how do you provide education in a system like that? Where you have people in for a short time, people in for a longer time. And people of different ages and different levels.

And it's quite a challenge. But it's something—another place where we think we might be able to make a difference. And so we've been focusing very intently on how to improve the education of the Indian children that are in juvenile detention facilities.

So we have a lot of work before us at Indian Affairs. We hope it will be guided by the insights that you all bring to this area. And I want to personally thank you for all the work that you've been doing to, you know, shed light on this problem and to start to understand it better, so that we can all do better around children exposed to violence. Thank you, Senator Dorgan.

Byron Dorgan: Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. [APPLAUSE] We very much appreciate your being here and your public service. I had served in the Congress for 30 years, in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. Served with many Justice Departments and Attorneys General. And I can say without equivocation

that this attorney general and this administration—Eric Holder and those that work with him—have been the most determined to change the discussion and to start to take action dealing with very important issues.

I really very much appreciate Eric Holder, Attorney General, his team—Tony West and others who are today. And the very presence of this advisory commission or this advisory task force is demonstration once again of their determination at the Justice Department to make a big, big difference. Please welcome the assistant—Associate, rather—Attorney General, Tony West, who's the number three person in the U.S. Justice Department. And Tony West, we very much appreciate your being with us today.

Tony West: Well, thank you, Senator Dorgan. And it really is an honor and a privilege to be here with you, to be here with Joanne Shenandoah, your co-chair, with the members of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee on American Indiana and Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence. President Enos, thank you so much for your support, for your leadership, for your comments this morning, which are inspiring and which I think will resonate throughout today's hearing.

Let me take a moment to recognize some of my colleagues who are with me from the Department of Justice. Judge Leonardo, who is the U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona; John Walsh, from the District of Colorado; Stephen Yarbrough, from the District of New Mexico; Mike Ormsby, the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington; and, of course, Amanda Marshall, the U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon; all of whom are so committed to the work of this committee and to the work that we have to do as the Department of Justice in Indian Country.

And Amanda is the new chair of the Attorney General Advisory Committee's NAIS—Native American Issues Subcommittee. There is no one who could be more committed to the protection and well-being of children. It's something that has been the basis of her work as a prosecutor. And I certainly look forward to her leadership on

that subcommittee.

My thanks goes out also to my other colleagues from the federal government. We just heard from Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Kevin Washburn, my good friend and colleague. Kevin, I want to thank you again for your invaluable presence and participation on this task force and for your partnership with the Department of Justice.

And let me also acknowledge a few other of the colleagues who made the trip out here from Washington with me. My friend and colleague from the Office of Justice Programs, Mary Lou Leary. We've already heard Bob Listenbee mentioned. We're glad to have him, from OJJDP. And Jim Antal. Our Office of Tribal Justice, Toulou. Thank you for being with us today. And from my office, Anna Martinez and Cindy Chang. I'm glad that they could be with us today.

A special thank you to our witnesses who will be speaking today. We're grateful for your participation this morning and we look forward to your insights and hearing about your experiences.

So we come together today from communities throughout the southwest, from communities through this country, to address the serious and urgent problem of violence and its effect on American Indian and Alaska Native children. Now, there is a lot we know about children who are exposed to violence. We know that more than 60% of all children in the United States are exposed to some form of violence, crime, or abuse, ranging from brief encounters as witnesses, to serious violent episodes as victims.

We know that almost 40% are direct victims of two or more violent acts. And for our children who are American Indian, who are Alaska Native, current research doesn't give us a comprehensive picture of its scope. But we know that they are particularly vulnerable to encountering violence and trauma.

A 2008 report by the Indian Country Child Trauma Center calculated that Native youth are two and a half times more

likely to experience trauma, when we compare them to their non-Native peers. And we know that from our work in Indian Country, the rates of crime and violence in some tribal areas is simply alarming. And we know that too often it is children who see it, children who experience it, children who have to live with it.

Today's hearing—the second of four—is part of the larger work that President Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder and this administration have pursued to fulfill this nation's trust responsibility to American Indians to invest in Native communities and work in partnership with sovereign tribal nations and Alaska Native communities to address the unique and persistent challenges that they face.

And over the last four years, I think we have made some important progress. We've seen almost a thousand grant awards to tribes totaling nearly $440 million in the last four years, to improve public safety in tribal communities. We've seen our partnership with tribes grow, so that we can make sure that they have the assistance and legal leverage they need to protect Native women.

We have worked to improve the safety of tribal communities by prosecuting more cases in Indian Country. Up by more than 50% over the last 50 years. And this hearing in particular, it grows, as you've heard, out of the work that the attorney general began three years with the Defending Childhood Initiative.

And the goal of that initiative was to improve our knowledge about what works to reduce children's exposure to violence and how to lessen the long-term effects and impacts that that exposure can have when it does occur.

And as part of that effort, as you all know, the attorney general appointed a national task force, co-chaired by Bob Listenbee, to identify ways to reduce children's exposure to violence and to recommend policy changes at the federal level that will help meet that goal. And one of those recommendations, of course, was to create a special effort.

A special effort aimed at examining and addressing the exposure of American Indian and Alaska Native children to violence, in ways that recognized the unique government-to-government relationship between sovereign tribal nations and the United States. A special effort that is embodied in this task force on American Indian and Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence.

Now this task force is actually different, I think, than your normal Washington blue ribbon panel that you may have heard about. First, its structure is very different. It's actually comprised of two groups. The first is a federal working group, consisting of knowledgeable, high-ranking federal officials from the Departments of Justice, Interior, and Health and Humane Services. Folks like Kevin Washburn and Tracy Toulou, Amanda Marshall, Tim Purdon and Leslie Hagen.

Names you know well because they work so hard in tribal communities every day. And their charge is to cut through the organizational red tape that can sometimes bind our best efforts, and to work together to fix those things affecting Native youth that we already know are broken. Things that we've long ago identified as problems that need more attention.

And to pool resources. To pool information. To pool energy across different agencies to take immediate action that will have a positive impact on kids' lives right now. So over the last several months, this group has facilitated the delivery of educational services and BIA juvenile detention facilities. It's coordinated wraparound services for child victims of crime who come in contact with the federal judicial system. It's improved judicial training opportunities on the Indian Child Welfare Act. And it's done so many other things.

Now the second part of the task force is the group that's meeting here today. The federal advisory committee. And their job is to improve our understanding of Native children's exposure to violence and develop a strategic plan of action that will help guide practitioners, policy makers, researchers at all levels. They began their field work in Bismarck last December. It was very cold, I remember, at that hearing. It's

a lot different here in Salt River.

And here in Salt River we will continue to explore this issue and look for solutions. Our goal today, of course, is to look specifically at the juvenile justice system and the role juvenile courts and detention facilities at the tribal, state, and federal level can play in supporting Native children who have been exposed to violence.

Now, sadly, we know that the road to involvement in the juvenile justice system, that is often paved with experiences of victimization and trauma. The rate of post-traumatic stress disorder for Indian youth is almost triple the rate of the general population. It's comparable to the PTSD rate among soldiers who are returning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And the last thing we want to do for our—is for our tribal, state, and federal juvenile justice institutions to be part of a tragic cycle of victimization and violence. And so we must make sure that our juvenile facilities are agents of positive change. That they are not enablers of more destructive choices.

But in addition to that, I think we also have to talk about ways how we can work with tribes to figure out the best ways we can lessen the experiences of victimization and trauma that Native youth experience in the first instance, which may lead them into juvenile justice systems.

We have to explore approaches that recognize that this is a unique population. That this is a population, according to the CDC, where suicide is among the second—is the second-leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native youth aged 15 to 34. That this is a population that experiences a suicide rate that is two and a half times higher than the national average for that age group.

We have to recognize that we need approaches to a population that has experienced historical trauma. And our approaches have to be informed by an awareness about the very real efforts to eliminate Native culture, such as forced

relocation, removal of children who were sent to boarding schools, prohibitions on the practice of Native language and cultural traditions, the outlawing of traditional religious practices.

Historical trauma that is real and that has affected multiple generations of first Americans. So we have to fashion approaches that recognize the reality in which Native youth are living today. It's something that we were actually reminded of yesterday, when we met with members of the youth council here. 15 young people who are bright, intelligent individuals, nearly all of them in high school and college-bound.

Individuals who were taking on leadership roles in their own communities and who I believe will be the next generation not just for tribal leadership, but beyond in the years ahead. We asked them, by a show of hands, how many of them had a family member who'd gone to college. And only three of the 15 hands went up. And when we asked them how many of them personally knew someone who had died by suicide, every single hand was raised.

We can do better than that. We can reverse those numbers. And more important, those young people, they believe that they can reverse those numbers. They believe that we can reverse the tide of despair and change history's course. So when I left that meeting—and I think we all felt the same way yesterday. When we left, I certainly felt hopeful. I felt confident about the work that we're doing.

I felt confident that all of us, together, are committed to working even harder to reducing violence in our tribal communities. Because those young people, they are not giving up. And if they're not giving up, we're not giving up. The work won't be easy. The answers will not come quickly. And we're not looking for easy answers in any instance, but for long-term solutions. Systematic and systemic solutions that will make a real difference for our children in Indian Country.

So this morning, let us reaffirm that commitment. A

commitment to the safety and health of tribal communities. And let us rededicate ourselves to giving Native children a future that is unclouded by violence. A future that is brightened by hope. That's the responsibility for each and every one of us. And I want to thank all of you and this advisory committee and the witnesses we'll hear from today for your commitment and dedication to that effort. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

[BEGIN COMMENTS FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS]

Byron Dorgan: Tony West, thank you very, very much for being here and for those remarks. We appreciate it and appreciate the entire Justice team that is present today. I want to recognize the tribal leaders who are here. Obviously there are many distinguished folks here, and I can't recognize them all. But I certainly want to recognize, as we have the chairman of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Diane Enos. Diane, thank you.

The governor of Gila River, Gregory Mendoza. Greg, are you here? Know that you were going to be here. Right back over there. [APPLAUSE] Thank you very much, Governor. Ned Norris, who will be on our second panel today, the chairman of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Ned, where are you? [APPLAUSE] Thank you very much for being with us. And last but not least, let me say the lieutenant governor of the Chickasaw Nation, Jefferson Keel, and also past president of the National Congress of American Indians is with us. A great Indian leader. [APPLAUSE]

We want to get the first panel up as quickly as we can, but I want a couple of things. Number one, to introduce the members of our panel. You will hear from them as they question the witnesses today. Joanne Shenandoah is the committee co-chair. Joanne, an Iroquois and composer and musical artist and remarkable person. Anita Fineday is to my left, your right. White Earth Band of Ojibwe, director of Indian Child Welfare at the Casey Family Programs.

Jefferson Keel, who I just introduced. Dolores Subia Bigfoot. Dolores is the director of the Indian Child Trauma Center at the University of Oklahoma, a Caddo Nation of Oklahoma enrolled member. Rear Admiral Eric Broderick, who spent more than three decades in the federal service, and former deputy administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

And Eddie Brown. Eddie is Pascua Yaqui cribe [sic] and Tohono O'odham Nation. Executive director of the American Indian Policy Institute and professor of American Indian Studies at Arizona State University. Valerie Davidson, senior director of legal and intergovernmental affairs for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

Matthew Fletcher, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Director of Indigenous Law and Policy Center at Michigan State University. And Ron Whitener. Ron? Do I have—is it Whitener? I'm sorry. Ron Whitener. Ron is with Squaxin Indian—Island Tribe, rather. Executive director of Native American Law Center at the University of Washington School of Law.

And Marilyn Zimmerman. Fort Peck Reservation. Director of the National Native Children's Trauma Center at the University of Montana.

As you can see, this is a very distinguished group of citizens who have joined this task force to focus on a very serious set of problems. We're going to have a number of panels today. We would like to have the panels present for no more than 15 to 20 minutes. We just have a time issue. But if you can—as is the case in Congress, if you can summarize your remarks as best you can, your permanent statement will be made a part of the record of this task force and we will appreciate that very much.

We've wired your chairs like car seat heaters. So if you start feeling them getting warm, it means your time has expired. But I know that you will do very, very well. I want to—before I call on Joanne for just a couple comments, let me condense

mine to about two minutes. Because I think Tony and others have said what needs to be said to describe the problem.

The late Vine Deloria, the author and historian, famously told of a white man who came up to an old Indian chief and asked the question, "What did you call this country before we named it the United States?" And the old Indian chief said, "We called it ours." [LAUGHTER] Pretty good answer, it seems to me. And it describes a lot of problems over many, many years.

And so this is about "ours." It's about our country. It's about our children. It's about our responsibility to the first Americans. And we're going to talk a lot about that today. In order to solve a problem, you have to understand the problem. Really understand the problem. The problems we're talking about, they are not easily understood. They're complex, difficult persistent. And they're dealing with the health of children.

Children who in some cases feel helpless and hopeless. But children who I think will get some help and some hope from the consistent determination of citizens like these—Justice Department, members of Congress, parents, and tribal officials. And I hope just to be a part of this group to make one more step in the necessary progress to deal with these issues for Native American children.

Joanne Shenandoah, thank you very much for co-chairing this. Let me call on you.

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you. [NATIVE LANGUAGE @ 50:16 - 50:17 – 0211A] for all of our relatives, all of our friends and family who are here, thank you for stepping forward and for being part of this historic event. I'd like to start off with a small—very small story of—but a very big story of Hiawatha, who's one of our prophets. He believed in the message of peace.

So something I do—and I'm very blessed to do—is to go around the world and offer this story of peace and hope and love to thousands and thousands of people. And so my message to you today is this: There was a great leader.

There was our peacemaker who came to him. He came to him, telling him the message of peace. And he came to him and he showed him something we call wampum, which is the purple-and-white shell. The quahog shell.

And this shell actually symbolizes how we've been bruised, because there's purple on the shell. So when we've been bruised, we see the purple on our arm or leg or wherever we've been hurt. When it fades into white, that represents the healing. So today this is what this is about. It's about healing. And I want to show you some of our wampum strands.

This is what we use when we speak to the people and to the creator. So when we hold this in our hand we are speaking our purest form of truth. And the beauty is that there can be healing. So Hiawatha, he lost all his seven daughters. He was so grieved. He lost them by this evil chief named Tadodaho. Tadodaho was so angered by the message of peace he put all these children to death.

So Hiawatha so believed in this message, but he was grieved. So he sat by this lake for days. Then he realized about this beautiful quahog shell and the message of peace and how we could have peace amongst one another. So if you see the Iroquois flag today—if you wouldn't mind holding that for me a little bit—you'll see the purple and the white representing—in the other direction—he came bringing a message of peace, where we bury our weapons under this tree.

And this represents our tree of peace. So there are four white roots. We'll go to four directions of the earth. So we ask that you join us there under this tree. And put our weapons there. And let us begin the healing. So I just want to offer this to Diane Enos, our chairwoman, if she's handy. This is our Iroquois flag. When we decided to forgive and we decided to come together as one.

So I want to offer you that message today. And I'm very blessed and honored to be part of this wonderful task force. While they sat me next to Beyoncé at the Grammys, this is

very, very honorable for me to be sitting amongst you all amazing people, who do some amazing work in Indian Country. And I want to thank you so much for hosting us.

Diane Enos: Thank you.

Joanne Shenandoah: [NATIVE LANGUAGE @ 53:13 – 0211A]

[APPLAUSE]

So just a few housekeeping things. Restrooms are located directly in the back of the house, near the water station. And there are additional restrooms upstairs, if need be. The safe room is located behind the stage and can be accessed through the door marked "safe room," just to my right. We would like to thank, of course, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community for providing breakfast and coffee this morning.

And lunch will also be complimented by them and will be served upstairs during the lunch break. On the safe room, this is something we'd like to offer to everyone in the room. Because this sort of testimony is not necessarily an easy thing. And so we want to offer this to you, by Bonnie and Jim Clairmont, some most amazing and wonderful people. Very spiritual. And will help guide us through this day. So if you could raise your hand.

So we welcome all the victims or survivors of crime who've chosen to attend this hearing. Because much of the testimony, as you know, might be a trigger. But we'd also like to give you this chance to have a debrief there and also to be heard and to be comforted.

Let's see. What else? I think that's it. And if you would mind your cell phones, that would be great. And pay attention to our brave and wonderful people who have come forward today to share with us.

Byron Dorgan: Joanne, thank you very much. And now we're going to turn to our first panel. And the first panel is going to give us an overview of the American Indian youth in tribal, state, and

federal juvenile justice systems. And with your permission, I'm going to introduce all three of you. And then you'll begin and sequentially give your presentations.

We have with us Addie Rolnick—Professor Rolnick, I should say—from the William S. Boyd School of Law at University of Nevada in Las Vegas. She's also the author of *The Tangled Web of Justice: American Indian and Alaska Native Youth in Federal, State, and Tribal Justice.* She has so many other credentials, and I think that's in your packet. But we very much appreciate, Professor Rolnick, your being with us today to present.

Then we will hear from Theresa Pouley, the chief judge of the Tulalip Tribal Court and member of the Indian Law and Order Commission. Again, if you will look at your packets, Judge Pouley has such a substantial background. We very much appreciate your being here to speak on this subject.

And then, finally, Carole Goldberg, who's in the middle. Vice chancellor, UCLA Academic Personnel. Professor, UCLA School of Law. And a member of the Indian Law and Order Commission. As well as being an author.

We very much appreciate the three of you taking the time. I am so impressed with what you've done and the contribution you're going to be able to make to this task force. Thank you very much. And Professor Rolnick, do you wish to begin?

[END OPENING CEREMONIES AND INTRODUCTIONS]