



2022 South Dakota Legislature
House Concurrent Resolution
6014
ENROLLED

AN ACT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Urging the federal government to fulfill treaty obligations by fully funding the Oglala and Rosebud Sioux Tribe Departments of Public Safety for the public safety crisis on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Sioux Reservations.

WHEREAS, the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservations are located within the boundaries of South Dakota and are home to the Oglala Lakota and Sicangu Lakota peoples, two of the largest tribal nations in the United States, with a combined geographical size comparable to the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has experienced seven homicides and 69 missing person reports in the last six months. Presently, the Oglala Sioux Tribe (OST) Department of Public Safety is grossly underfunded by 60 percent due to the federal government leaving treaty obligations unfulfilled. The substantial lack of funding cripples the current capacity of 33 federally funded positions and 19 grant and tribally funded positions. The needs of the OST Department of Public Safety exceed 100 law enforcement officers given the population and land base area of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, yet only 48 positions are filled; and

WHEREAS, the OST Department of Public Safety serves 43,000 reservation residents and is unable to meet the grueling demands of 131,000 emergency calls received from October 2020 to September 2021. The demand has overwhelmed staff, decreased response time in life and death scenarios, and ultimately undermined the confidence in law enforcement and rule of law; and

WHEREAS, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe experiences similar effects due to the lack of resources. Presently, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (RST) Department of Public Safety has a total of 29 federally funded law enforcement staff. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe has an immediate need

of 5-10 additional officers, and an overall need of double the current Department of Public Safety staff. Additionally, for the last two years, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe has funded the RST Drug Task Force, which encompasses three law enforcement officers. However, the funding was revoked and the program will likely be discontinued if no additional funding is provided. These needs would be easily addressed if the federal government fulfilled its treaty obligations to the tribe; and

WHEREAS, the RST Department of Public Safety serves over 30,000 tribal members and received over 24,000 calls of service in 2021. The department performed over 2,700 arrests, with 527 of those involving crimes of violence. The numerous responsibilities of staff, coupled with severe underfunding of the department, results in a lower efficacy rate, overworked law enforcement officers, and increased public safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, due to the overwhelming need, severity of crimes, and lack of support of the tribal departments of public safety, violent crimes have become far too familiar, thus resulting in unsafe living conditions for elders, children, and community members. Little hope of meaningful change is evident without considerable investments in resources and manpower for these departments:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Seventh Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the Senate concurring therein, that the President of the United States, his delegates, the South Dakota Congressional delegation, and members of the United States Congress fulfill treaty obligations by adequately funding the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Departments of Public Safety by amending the current federal funding formula for tribal nations.

Adopted by the House of Representatives,
Concurred in by the Senate,

March 7, 2022
March 9, 2022

Spencer Gosch
Speaker of the House

Patricia Miller
Chief Clerk

Larry Rhoden
President of the Senate

Kay Johnson
Secretary of the Senate