

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

FILED SENATE
Mar 25, 2025
S.B. 560
PRINCIPAL CLERK

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SENATE BILL DRS15253-ML-90

Short Title: Taskforce on Missing BIPOC Women. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Murdock, Smith, and Applewhite (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE ON MISSING WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO ARE
3 BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) TO DEVELOP POLICY
4 CHANGES THAT WILL WORK TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF CARE AND CONCERN
5 FOR MISSING AND MURDERED BIPOC WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH STATE
6 GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** Findings. – The General Assembly finds all of the following:

- 9 (1) According to a 2020 report by the Women's Media Center there are
10 64,000-75,000 missing black women and girls across the United States.
11 (2) Cases involving black women and girls often do not receive the attention they
12 need and there are often barriers to families reporting a loved one, such as
13 mistrust of police, and racial disparities in how law enforcement treat
14 disappearances.
15 (3) The tens of thousands of black women and girls who are missing include
16 abductees, sex trafficking victims, and runaways. Black women and girls exist
17 at the intersection of racism and sexism, and often face worse health, wealth,
18 housing, education, and employment outcomes.
19 (4) Black girls comprise over forty percent (40%) of domestic sex trafficking
20 victims in the United States.
21 (5) Law enforcement often categorize missing black girls as runaways and fail to
22 treat their cases with urgency.
23 (6) According to a 2020 report by the Sovereign Bodies Institute, a nonprofit,
24 indigenous-led research organization, at least 2,306 missing Native American
25 women and girls have gone missing in the last 40 years in the United States,
26 about 1,800 of whom were killed or vanished.
27 (7) Systemic vulnerability and compounding suppressions have resulted in mass
28 amounts of disappeared indigenous peoples, with the National Congress of
29 American Indians finding that an estimated forty percent (40%) of women
30 who are victims of sex trafficking identify as American Indian, Alaska Native,
31 or First Nations.
32 (8) Families of Native American women and girls who have gone missing report
33 a lack of cultural awareness, systemic racism and sexism, and widespread
34 apathy by law enforcement and express frustration that their cases are not
35 pursued.



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1 (9) There is not comprehensive state or federal data about missing and murdered
2 Native Americans. Advocates argue that poor record keeping, racial
3 misclassification, adverse relationships between tribal governments and
4 outside law enforcement have led to an underreporting of cases.

5 (10) Latinx individuals are underrepresented or misclassified in crime and missing
6 person statistics because they are often categorized as "White" in official
7 reporting systems. This classification issue has major implications for
8 visibility, resource allocation, and data accuracy regarding missing persons.

9 **SECTION 2.** Establishment. – There is established a Task Force on Missing Women
10 and Girls who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

11 **SECTION 3.** Composition. – The Task Force established in Section 2 of this act
12 shall consist of the following members:

13 (1) The Senior Director for Child, Family, and Adult Services of the Department
14 of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, or the Director's
15 designee.

16 (2) The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety, or the Secretary's designee.

17 (3) The Director of the State Bureau of Investigation, or the Director's designee.

18 (4) Two members at large appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

19 (5) Two members at large appointed by the Speaker of the House of
20 Representatives.

21 (6) One member at large appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

22 (7) One member at large appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
23 Representatives.

24 **SECTION 4.** At Large Member Requirements. – At large members appointed in
25 accordance with Section 3 of this act shall be representative of the communities experiencing the
26 crisis described in Section 1 of this act, including directly impacted individuals, reflect the
27 diversity of this State, and have experience in cultural competency.

28 **SECTION 5.** Duties. – The Task Force shall have all of the following duties:

29 (1) Develop policy changes that will work to address the lack of care and concern
30 for missing and murdered BIPOC women and girls with State governmental
31 agencies, including identifying policies to ensure first responders are
32 culturally competent.

33 (2) Advance the knowledge of communities on the severity of BIPOC women and
34 girls who are missing and murdered.

35 (3) Ensure BIPOC communities are educated and trained on the prevention,
36 protection, and protocols relating to missing BIPOC women and girls as it
37 relates to social media.

38 (4) Develop a strategy to collect statistics, demographics, surveys, oral histories,
39 and data analysis.

40 (5) Recommend preventive programming and ideas to advance the safety of
41 women and girls, including policies that address the overlapping forms of
42 oppression faced by BIPOC women and girls.

43 (6) Identify major traffic hubs, highways, and resource extraction sites that lead
44 to or are responsible for the facilitation of the abduction of BIPOC women
45 and girls.

46 (7) Create a Statewide awareness campaign.

47 **SECTION 6.** Public Input. – In carrying out the duties set forth in Section 5 of this
48 act, the Task Force shall seek public input by holding public hearings in each region of the State
49 and accepting public input in writing.

50 **SECTION 7.** Meeting Location; Expenses. – The Task Force may meet at various
51 locations around the State in order to promote greater public participation in its deliberations and

1 to accommodate the travel considerations of the members. The Legislative Services Commission
2 shall grant adequate meeting space to the Task Force in the State Legislative Building or the
3 Legislative Office Building. The Legislative Services Commission shall allocate from a portion
4 of the funds appropriated to the General Assembly sufficient funds for the operation of the Task
5 Force. The Task Force may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided
6 by G.S. 120-32.02. Members of the Task Force shall receive subsistence and travel expenses at
7 the rates provided in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate.

8 **SECTION 8.** Report. – On or before two years after the effective date of this act, the
9 Task Force shall submit to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
10 Representatives, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House of
11 Representatives a report containing its findings and recommendations. The report required under
12 this section shall be made available to the public.

13 **SECTION 9.** Effective and Termination Dates. – This act is effective when it
14 becomes law. The Task Force shall terminate three years after the effective date of this act.