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Executive Director of the Native Alliance Against Violence to Attend Ceremony to Commemorate the Signing of the Violence Against Women Authorization Act of 2013

(OKLAHOMA CITY – March 6, 2013) – Dawn R. Stover, Executive Director of the Native Alliance Against Violence (NAAV) has been invited by the White House to attend a ceremony to commemorate the signing of Senate Bill 47, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. The ceremony will take place in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at the Department of Interior’s Sidney R. Yates Auditorium.

Founded in 2009, the NAAV is Oklahoma’s only tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalition. Founded, led and governed by Native women, the NAAV is housed at the Oklahoma City University School of Law in the Native American Legal Resource Center (NALRC) and serves the federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma. Through the Spirit of respect and cooperation, the Native Alliance Against Violence strives to unify Tribal service programs throughout Oklahoma by providing culturally appropriate technical assistance, training and support to eliminate domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking to restore balance and safety for Native communities.

Senate Bill 47 passed by the Senate in February 2013 and through the House on February 28, 2013 by a vote of 286 to 138, includes critical provisions to restore and strengthen tribal authority to protect Native women from violence in Indian country. The hard-fought passage comes more than 500 days after VAWA expired. “The VAWA 2013 legislation is a major stride forward in addressing the jurisdictional gaps in United States law that has threatened the safety of Native women,” stated Dawn Stover.

The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that every ninety seconds, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted, and that domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women in the United States. However, the rates for Native women are much higher, with Native women experiencing the highest rates of assault in the United States. “One in three Native women will be raped in her lifetime, and six in ten will be physically assaulted,” said Director Stover. “The long overdue reauthorization of VAWA comes at a critical time.”

Director Stover will travel to the Nation’s capital on Wednesday where she will be joined by hundreds of tribal leaders and friends for the historical signing on Thursday, March 7th.

For more information about how you can help end violence against women contact the Native Alliance Against Violence at 405-208-5189 or on the web at www.OklahomaNAAV.org.

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