



COALITION to STOP
VIOLENCE AGAINST
NATIVE WOMEN

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Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham
490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

May 5, 2021

Dear Governor Lujan-Grisham,

I am reaching out on behalf of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women to ask for your support in responding to an injustice that has happened in our community. Last spring, Joleen Nez was arrested for improper trash disposal, a petty misdemeanor, that ultimately resulted in her death. Since the loss of Joleen's life, there has been no investigation into the circumstances of her death, no autopsy release from the Office of Medical Examiner, and a complete failure to follow up from the Bernalillo Metropolitan Detention Center, the District Attorney's Office and Albuquerque Police Department.

The unnecessary death of Joleen Nez is another example of the ongoing crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. We have learned from families, advocates, and communities that they lose their loved one twice: once in death, and again in the system.

We have an opportunity to change this for Joleen Nez.

Today is Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Awareness Day, and we have all been called to honor the memory of lost loved ones through proclamations, awareness events and community gatherings, yet, justice for missing and murdered indigenous women lingers, unachieved. The Coalition is holding deep awareness that proclamations and days of remembrance are just platitudes unless backed with action.

We respectfully urge you to take action and ask these questions with us: Why was there not an investigation into the death of Joleen? Where is the autopsy report from OMI? Who is responsible for this death and how they be held accountable? How is Joleen's family being supported during this time?

We have lost Joleen once, please help us not lose her again in the system.

Respectfully,

Angel Charley
Executive Director
Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women

Violence is not our tradition.