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#### **(U.S.)-Bill Aims To Protect Native American Children**

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 10/31/2013 07:39 AM

By The Associated Press

Senators from North Dakota and Alaska have introduced a bill to establish a national commission to protect Native American children.

Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota says the legislation would create a commission on Native American children to conduct an intensive study into issues facing Native children.

Challenges include high rates of poverty, staggering unemployment, child abuse, domestic violence, crime, substance abuse and few economic opportunities. Heitkamp is a member of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and says the bill aims to provide a deeper look into the challenges and offer solutions.

Heitkamp says Native American children are the most at-risk population in the country facing serious disparities in safety, health and education.

Heitkamp introduced the bill with Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.