September 7, 2022

Secretary Deb Haaland

Department of the Interior

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

Kaysera Stops Pretty Places was murdered in Montana—on or very near the Crow Reservation—three years ago, and still to this day, federal and state authorities have failed to investigate. For three years, Kasyera’s family have asked the Bureau of Indian Affairs Cold Cases Task Force (now known as the Missing and Murdered Unit, or the MMU) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate Kaysera’s homicide, but law enforcement agencies have done nothing. Kaysera’s family has provided the authorities with tips and evidence to aid an investigation, yet they continue to be ignored.

On August 24, 2019, Kaysera Stops Pretty Places went missing in a suburban neighborhood in Hardin, Montana, less than a half mile off the Crow Reservation. Kaysera’s body was discovered five days after she went missing, and although significant evidence exists indicating who took her life in August of 2019, her killer still walks free. He has never been charged with any crime, nor has he actually been investigated.

Days before Kaysera went missing, she filmed and posted to social media the beating of her 15-year-old brother by law enforcement at Crow Fair. The officers beating the minor in a wheelchair included Big Horn County deputies. The U.S. Attorney’s Office investigated the incident and officers were reprimanded. There is reason to believe that one of the Big Horn County Sheriff’s deputies under investigation for the scene filmed by Kaysera was a responding officer when her body was discovered.

Despite the suspicious circumstances surrounding Kaysera’s death, the FBI, the Big Horn County Sheriff’s Office, the Montana Department of Justice, and the MMU have done absolutely nothing to investigate. Kaysera’s family has provided the authorities with tips and evidence to aid the investigation, yet they continue to be ignored. And although the MMU has initiated contact with Kaysera’s family, the MMU has not agreed to investigate her homicide.

Now, on the three-year anniversary of her murder, we ask that the MMU do its job and bring justice to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (“MMIWG”) like Kaysera. The federal government has a trust duty and responsibility to investigate these cases. All too often, MMU officers say they won’t investigate the homicide of a Native woman or girl because the local County Sheriff’s Office has not “consented” to the MMU’s investigation. The Department of Interior’s trust duty and responsibility to safeguards the lives of Native women and girls, however, is not contingent on a grant of permission from a local Sheriff.

As Secretary of the Interior, you have the power and authority to change the harmful policies that prevent the MMU from investigating homicides of Native women and girls. We demand that you take any and all action necessary to ensure the MMU investigates Kaysera’s murder.

You created the MMU in April of 2021. Kaysera was murdered in August of 2019. Her family has waited three years for justice. They have waited long enough.

 Sincerely,