

in connection with this initiative, it sounds like many of the law and order problems that were raised back in 1990 have progressively worsened on many of our reservations. The situation is made more difficult by the perception of gangs and other criminal elements that Indian reservations are places of lawlessness or safe havens from criminal justice.

So Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your efforts in addressing this matter and for working closely with the Indian tribal leaders in the reform initiative that is the focus of the hearing today. I also appreciate the opportunity to hear from all of the stakeholders in this matter throughout the legislative process.

I look forward to the testimony that we will receive here this morning and again appreciate all that you have done to assist the Committee. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murkowski, thank you.

Senator Johnson, do you have an opening statement?

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIM JOHNSON,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Dorgan, for holding this incredibly important hearing. I am glad to see so many South Dakota tribal leaders in the room.

I welcome John Thune to the hearing and would place my full statement in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Senator Johnson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. TIM JOHNSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA

Thank you Senator Dorgan for holding this hearing and I am glad to see so many South Dakota tribal leaders in the room. Their presence here demonstrates the importance of this issue to the tribes in my state.

The law enforcement challenges facing Indian Country are overwhelming and much of them have to do with inadequate funding. However, there are also considerable challenges facing tribes due to jurisdictional and legal barriers. I think this legislation goes a long way to address those barriers and I intend to join the bill as an original cosponsor when it is introduced.

Additionally, in my role as an appropriator I will continue to push for additional resources for tribal law enforcement and crime prevention programs. When given the tools to do so, our tribal leaders are both resourceful and creative in protecting their own communities. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Burr, did you have an opening statement?

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BURR,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH CAROLINA**

Senator BURR. Mr. Chairman, if I could, very briefly, I want to welcome our entire panel, but I want to specifically welcome the top Federal prosecutor in the western portion of my State, North Carolina, Gretchen Shappert. It is a pleasure to see you, Gretchen, more importantly to have you here to discuss your thoughts on this important issue and the legislation before us.

Just so my colleagues are aware, Mr. Chairman, Gretchen is an accomplished jurist in North Carolina. She has been a prosecutor for 20 years and has been a U.S. attorney for the Western District of North Carolina since the year 2004. She is also the Chair of the

Department of Justice's Native American Issues Subcommittee. She knows the issue very well and recognizes the challenges that face tribal communities in my State as well as communities across the entire Country.

To help my colleagues understand her dedication and work ethic, Gretchen has as a prosecutor, her staff would tell you that she often arrives at the U.S. Attorney's office in Charlotte, North Carolina at 3:00 a.m. to begin her work day. She also carries a full case load, which is rare for a top prosecutor in any given judicial district, and manages the entire office. We are certainly fortunate to have Gretchen and the other witnesses here today to educate this Committee on the issues and to help us understand the challenges that we are faced with as we attempt to resolve these issues.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you, and I welcome you, Gretchen.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Burr, those of us in the north sometimes think of southerners as boasting from time to time, particularly with respect to Texans. But this 3:00 a.m. start time for work in North Carolina, that is pretty unusual.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. I hope that is a full day.

Anyway, thank you for introducing the U.S. Attorney from your State. We deeply appreciate your doing that.

Let me begin this morning, Senator Thune is our first witness. I am going to ask him to proceed from his perch on the dais at this point.

I should mention, the co-sponsors of the draft bill that we have introduced are Senator Johnson, Senator Domenici, Senator Tester, Senator Thune, and I believe others are going to be joining us soon. So let me thank you, Senator Thune. I will introduce you and then we are going to introduce each of the witnesses for statements, following which we will ask questions.

Senator Thune, you may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN THUNE,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Murkowski, for allowing me to testify on this important piece of legislation.

I also want to thank our witnesses for being here today, in particular, Chairman Ron His Horse Is Thunder represents the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. He has provided extraordinary leadership when it comes to improving public safety on his reservation. So thank you for being here.

We also have another of our Chairs here today, Chairman Cournoyer of the Yankton Sioux Tribe. It is nice to have you in the audience as well. I appreciate very much the leadership that our tribal leaders are providing, particularly on this issue.

Unfortunately for Chairman Ron His Horse Is Thunder's Tribe, which is located in both North and South Dakota, he knows firsthand the struggles that are associated with the lack of public safety. I look forward to hearing his comments on the draft legislation that the Committee is discussing today.