

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