



OG LALA SIOUX TRIBE

O F F I C E O F T H E V I C E P R E S I D E N T

Statement on South Dakota Senate Bill 191 March 1, 2023

Today, on its final step in the legislative process, Senate Bill 191 ([SB191 https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bill/24323](https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bill/24323)), was killed by the South Dakota House of Representatives with a vote of 26-42. The rejection of SB191 by the South Dakota Legislature is deplorable and signifies the State's refusal to work with sovereign tribal nations to protect Indian children and families. This outcome also exemplified the stark contrast in tribal and state values. What we saw today on the House floor is a State that places value on a system that monetizes Indian children. We witnessed a legislature willing to invest in prisons rather than addressing the systemic issues that fill them. Even when tribes approach the state with Cante Waste Nape Ciyuzapeye, (a warm heart and a handshake) in a spirit of collaboration, we are greeted with resistance and opposition. As Lakota people we live and work within the concepts of Mitakuye Oyasin (we are all related) and our wakanyeja (children) are sacred, forever connected to our nations and ancestors. The state of South Dakota proved today that it is not a good relative to the nine tribes whose ancestral lands upon which it sits. We implore the other tribal nations to declare a state of emergency and use any and all extraordinary measures to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our wakanyeja (children).

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