

I am here this morning to urge you to pass H.B. 781

Collection
Racial
Profiling
I truly
Believe
- MT'S
Racial
Profiling
Laws need
- have
- accountability
- transparency



The Patrol officer pulled his gun, pointed it at my brother, and began yelling at him!

This entire time I had been asking the officer why he was doing this to me. My brother, still confused, then spoke to me in Crow, asking me what was happening. I answered to him in Crow and told him I was being arrested, to follow me to the jail in the car and we would figure it out from there. When the officer heard my brother and I talking in Crow he became very irate and agitated. He told me to, "Shut the f##k up!" and said "We don't talk that way!" He then grabbed me by the hair, told me I should speak English, and began shoving me to the Police car. At this time I was so scared that I literally ran to the police car and as the officer caught up to me he shoved my head right into the top of the door as I leaned to sit in the car. On the way to the jail-house he continued to aggressively and meanly berate me. He continued to tell me I should speak English, and told me he knew what my brother and I were saying.

When I got to the detention facility, as I was being fingerprinted, I found out that I had been arrested for an unpaid traffic violation...my life had been busy and I had simply forgotten to pay it and they had issued a bench warrant. I told the officers about my treatment during the arrest. Those officers agreed I had been mistreated, that I should have been told what I was being arrested for, and I should have been given the opportunity to pay the fine before being arrested.

I did file a formal complaint. I had a meeting the Billings Chief of Police. I told the Chief that I believed this incident was racially motivated, and he refused to acknowledge it. He instead chose to pass it off as a mistake by an over-eager rookie cop and told me the officer had been reprimanded. I still shudder when I see that Policeman, to this day.

I told the Police Chief that I wanted the Police Department to acknowledge its problem with my people. I wanted them to work to get training to stop more incidents like this from happening. Ten years later, I have family and friends who continue to get discriminated against and mistreated by the Billings Police Department. Where is the progress?

There are two types of OWE
Native American people
continue to get discriminated
against and mistreated by the
Billings Police Department

- VELMA PRETTY ON TOP

I am a Professional Native American woman. I work as the Executive Director for a nonprofit organization here in Billings. About ten years ago I was finishing my bachelors degree at mt Billings and had a horrible experience with a Billings Patrol officer.

On my way home one evening, my brother and I stopped at a local gas station to wait for his ride back to the Crow reservation. We had been in the parking lot, in my car, for about a half-hour when a Billings Police car pulled into the gas station parking lot and circled my car, shining the spot light into the car, and finally stopping immediately in front of me.

The officer approached my car using a flashlight to blind me. He asked for my license and registration. A short while later, he asked me to step out. I complied. He then grabbed me, slammed me against the car and handcuffed me. At this point I was in shock. When my brother heard the thud of my body against the car he jumped out and began asking what was happening.

For this one story there are hundreds more. I urge you to pass H.B. 781

Data Collection for Racial Profiling

Montana's Racial Profiling Laws need to have accountability

and transparency