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Statement of Gloria Allred on the Anniversary of the Death of Savanna Greywind

This anniversary is yet another painful reminder of the tragic loss of Savanna Greywind, the young, beautiful daughter of Norberta and Joe Greywind.

Savanna, like many pregnant women, was looking forward to becoming a mother and raising Haisley Jo with all the love that she could shower on her newborn daughter.

Instead, however, Savanna's life was cut short by the most cruel, callous, criminal act that could ever have been inflicted on this innocent, young, pregnant woman.

In a short period of time and without warning, Savanna's hopes and dreams were taken from her. She would never be able to kiss, hug, hold or raise her beautiful daughter, Haisley Jo, and Haisley Jo would be denied her mother's love, her mother's touch, her mother's scent, her mother's smile, and all that only a mother can provide to her child.

Although no one will ever replace Savanna, Haisley Jo, a miracle child, is fortunate to be loved, protected and cherished by her grandparents, Norberta and Joe, and Savanna's siblings.

I have seen Haisley Jo recently. She is beautiful, happy and healthy. She is very bright and full of energy, and she has a very strong bond with her

grandparents. She is walking and talking and loving life, and she is a joy to her family.

Norberta and Joe have and will always make sure that she knows how much Savanna loved her and they will share the beautiful memories that her family had of Savanna over the years.

What Needs Change

The Fargo police department needs to change. Although key figures have left, more needs to be done. Law enforcement needs to show more respect for the concerns and information provided to them by family members of missing women.

When Savanna's family reported to the Fargo police department that Savanna was missing, they felt that they were treated with disrespect by the police and that the information they provided was scoffed at, perhaps because they are Native American. It should be noted that the information they provided at that time was, in fact, correct and had they been listened to, Savanna and Haisley Jo would likely have been found earlier, which would have avoided needless additional pain and suffering that the family experienced because they were disrespected by the police.

Some of the early searches that were conducted by the police were cursory and they did not find the evidence that they would have found if they had been conducting a professional search according to protocol.

The suspects (who have now been convicted) were allowed to leave the premises (with Haisley Jo hidden from view), and they were able to carry out the body of Savanna and throw her in the Red River, because the crime scene was not secured.

There can be no excuse or justification for the way that the police mishandled this case and their original investigation of it. They appeared to ignore warnings and helpful information by the family and some tips that were offered to them.

The police department, in the future, needs to change their culture, have training in bias and implicit bias, and they need to learn that the lives of Native Americans should be valued and treated with respect and dignity. It is ironic that in the few years before her death, Savanna developed a significant concern for missing and murdered Native American women and she spoke to her mother about it.

In her memory, Norberta will continue to support that movement, MMIW, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. She will also support bills in Congress and the North Dakota legislature which will provide more rights and equal protections for Native Americans, whose lives should matter as much as the lives of everyone else. It is fitting that Savanna's photograph is now on many posters in support of MMIW and the cause which meant so much to her.

On this second anniversary, we should all remember that each of us has a responsibility to be the change we wish to see in the world. I will continue to support Savanna's family, and I feel honored to have witnessed their strength and courage and the joy that Haisley Jo brings to her family with her laughter. She reminds them every day of their precious Savanna, who will always be in their hearts.

GLORIA ALLRED
REPRESENTING THE GREYWIND FAMILY
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