



The 22nd Navajo Nation Council - Office of the Speaker

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Speaker Naize Meets with Arizona Governor Brewer and Attorney General Horne

Phoenix, AZ — On Thursday, March 24th, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize, and Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, met with Arizona Governor Jan Brewer and Attorney General Tom Horne in an effort to build new relationships as the two Navajo leaders begin their respective terms.

In this first visit with Governor Brewer since elected Speaker in January, Naize acknowledged her efforts in urging the Bureau of Indian Affairs to adjust the land status to allow for the building of the Twin Arrows Resort and Spa, now under construction near the Leupp Chapter and the city of Flagstaff.

The Governor applauded the efforts the Navajo Nation made as they planned for the gaming operation. She appreciated how the Nation reached out for community input to minimize the impacts to its neighbors.

"I also wanted to let you know the great help ADOT (Arizona Department of Transportation) gave while coordinating with our transportation department on the interchange that will serve the Twin Arrows Resort," said Naize, "I hope this spirit of cooperation within our agencies continues as we work through the many challenges our governments face."

Earlier in the week the Governor sent a message to state house leaders that rather than making cuts across the board that tend to weaken needed assistance and education programs, there should be an effort to make strategic cuts that would streamline the bureaucracy first.

"I understand the funding challenges that were in your budget during these economic rough times. I appreciate your efforts to keep education programs intact and having the philosophy that a strong academically prepared population will lead to a stronger state," said Naize.

In the meeting with Attorney General Horne, Speaker Naize and President Shelly thanked him for his understanding of the unique legal status that tribes have at the state and federal level. Horne responded that he has had a lot of experience with the Navajo Nation in his previous position as the Arizona Superintendent of Schools.

Speaker Naize explained he looks forward to working with the Attorney General's office along with the 23 Navajo Nation Council Delegates on various issues from taxation to further defining the role of a government-to-government relationship with the State of Arizona.

The Attorney General acknowledged the state and the tribes in Arizona will not always agree on the approach to address different issues, but he also said having a great stable relationship and friendship between the two groups would make those conflicts fewer and easier to navigate when they occur.

Naize also invited the Attorney General to address the Council at a future session which he accepted.

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