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FEBRUARY 10, 2017

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## PRESIDENT BEGAYE SIGNS SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING THAT WILL BRING 10 HOMES TO FBFA AREA



Along with community members, chapter officials and council representatives, President Russell Begaye signed legislation approving supplemental funding in the amount of \$254,656 for housing development within the Tonalea/Red Lake Chapter.

TWIN ARROWS-At a signing ceremony held at Twin Arrows on Thursday, Feb. 9, President Russell Begaye approved supplemental funding in the amount of \$254,656 for housing in the Former Bennett Freeze Area (FBFA) within the Tonalea/Red Lake Chapter.

The funds will be allocated for the construction of 10 homes in the Former Bennett Freeze Area.

Before signing the legislation, President Begaye addressed the group of gathered community members and leaders. The group included Delegate Tuchoney Slim (Bodayway Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'Bii" To, LeChee, Tonalea/Redlake), Tonalea Chapter President Sarah Slim, Tonalea Community Development Committee (TCDC) Chairwoman Cindy Covey.

"The Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) wants to do more. We want to see more electric lines, septic tanks, and water lines in the FBFA area. We'd like to see Escrow funds used for renovation and new homes as opposed to dipping into UUFB,"

President Begaye said. "We are excited about this legislation and we want to work together with the FBFA Chapters. Show us your plans and let's bring development to the whole FBFA area."

Chapter President Slim thanked OPVP. She said that ever since the lifting of the Freeze in 2009, the people in the FBFA communities have been very hopeful.

"A year and a half ago when the three branches of government came together to re-engage in the rehabilitation of the FBFA, a lot of hope was instilled in the heart of the community elders," Chapter President Slim said. "Our community started to build capacity at the grassroots level. We used and believe in sweat equity."

TCDC Chair Cindy Covey also thanked President Begaye for his efforts in signing off on the funding. Covey said that she wanted to assure the president that the projects are shovel ready.

"We did our data collection and identified infrastructure, voters,

Certificates of Indian Blood and the other essential items that needed to be in place for the new homes to go up,” she said.

Covey emphasized that the TCDC didn’t face resistance because they began their work at the community level.

“I know you’ve done the planning within your community. You had a vision and you empowered your people by incorporating the grassroots views and concerns,” President Begaye said. “I’ve been tracking your progress because I want to see how we can replicate those efforts in other communities.”

Delegate Slim thanked both President Begaye and Vice President Nez for their support in this effort and President’s signing of the legislation. By signing the legislation, Delegate Slim said it will em-

power the community members and bring development to the FBFA area.

“Your strength is giving strength back to the people,” he said. “This has been a team and collaborative effort.”

President Begaye also expressed appreciation to Delegate Slim for his support of this legislation.

“This is just the beginning. We have to continue making progressive change. That is how you become successful,” President Begaye said. “OPVP is looking forward to future projects and we are committed to supporting development within the FBFA.”

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