



THE NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

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President Nez and Vice President Lizer advocate for Navajo students, capital outlay funding, and other initiatives in New Mexico

SANTA FE, N.M. – President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer spent Thursday and Friday, at the New Mexico State Capitol meeting with Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, cabinet secretaries, and top House and Senate members to push for fairer distribution of educational funding through Impact Aid bills, Capital Outlay Project funding and Tribal Infrastructure funds, promote economic development initiatives, and present the priorities of the Nez-Lizer Administration.



PHOTO: President Jonathan Nez and New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham following a meeting at the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe, N.M. on Feb. 1, 2019.

“The Navajo Nation has 54 of its 110 chapters in the state of New Mexico, and each community is in need of assistance to advance their projects. The Nation has set aside approximately half a billion dollars in recent years for chapter and infrastructure projects, but we need the state of New Mexico to partner with us,” said President Nez. “Working together with the Navajo Nation Council, we have a strong united voice at the state level.”

President Nez was also invited to speak at a joint session of the New Mexico House and Senate members on Friday, where he presented the priorities for the Nez-Lizer Administration, which are based on many meetings and conversations that President Nez and Vice President Lizer had in over 70 Navajo communities.

“We view the priorities as mandates set forth by the Navajo people,” President Nez added. “We visited over 70 chapters in recent months and the resounding call for change was overwhelming. Working together, we have to work collaboratively to create solutions and create positive change for our people.”

Prior to the joint session, President and Vice President joined Gov. Lujan Grisham, Congresswoman Debra Haaland (D – Dist. 1), and other tribal leaders at the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to recognize the 10th Anniversary of the State-Tribal Collaborative Act.

Signed in 2009 by former Gov. Bill Richardson, the Act requires cabinet-level agencies to develop policies that promote communication and cooperation between the state and tribal governments and ensures that each of the agencies designates a tribal liaison.

During Friday’s ceremony, Gov. Lujan Grisham signed a proclamation designating the first Friday of February as “American Indian Day” throughout the state of New Mexico each year.

President Jonathan Nez also took part in a discussion with New Mexico tribal leaders and state legislators, regarding Impact Aid for students throughout the state. Impact Aid is a top priority for the Nez-Lizer Administration and the 24th Navajo Nation Council. President Nez and Speaker Seth Damon issued a joint letter last week to state legislators outlining the Navajo Nation’s position on Impact Aid, which is supported by a resolution approved by Council members.

“Working together with the Navajo Nation Council, the Nation’s leaders will continue to present a strong united voice in support of fair distribution of educational funds to benefit Navajo students in New Mexico,” President Nez stated.

Vice President Lizer joined President Nez in providing testimony before the Senate Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee in support of Senate Bill 365 sponsored by Sen. John Pinto (D-Dist. 3), which seeks an appropriation of \$1 million from the state to assist with the design and construction of a Navajo Code Talker Museum and Veterans Center.

They also met with newly appointed Secretary for the Department of Economic Development Alicia Keyes, to speak in support of tourism including film production, request the state’s continued support and assistance with the glove manufacturing project in the community of Church Rock, and other projects to create revenue and jobs on the Navajo Nation.

Among other top state leaders, President Nez and Vice President Lizer also met with the Lt. Governor Howie Morales, Speaker of the House Ryan Egolf (D – Dist. 47), Senate President Pro Tempore Mary Kay Papen (D – Dist. 38), Secretary of Indian Affairs designee Lynn Trujillo, and State Rep. D. Wonda Johnson (D – Dist. 5).

To view the priorities of the Nez-Lizer Administration, please click on the following link:
http://nnols.org/uploads/FileLinks/1a4b2d1ced224ac084e3f8fc5fda46ee/State_of_the_Navajo_Nation_Address_January_2019.pdf

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