



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Navajo Nation commends the passage of Indigenous Peoples' Day in the State of New Mexico

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer applaud today's approval of New Mexico H.B. 100 by the New Mexico Legislature. The bill amends the state's observed holidays by replacing "Columbus Day" with "Indigenous Peoples' Day" in the month of October. The Nez-Lizer Administration respectfully requests New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to sign the measure into law.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer commend State Rep. Derrick J. Lente (D), Rep. Andrea Romero (D), and Sen. Benny Shendo, Jr. (D) for sponsoring the bill.

President Nez stated that the change is long overdue and that by honoring Indigenous people with an annual holiday it will enable and inspire people, especially Navajo youth, throughout the state to learn the true history of our people and the resiliency that continues to define Native Americans to this day.

"In 1937, the federal government declared Columbus Day as a holiday without input from Native Americans and without knowing the true history of Native Americans. For many years, Indigenous people have protested Columbus Day because it celebrates colonialism, oppression, and injustice inflicted on Indigenous peoples," said President Nez. "Observing Indigenous Peoples' Day allows citizens to recognize our rich heritage and serves as a step toward healing and growth."

President Nez added that he is hopeful that the passage of the bill will also inspire educators throughout the state to teach the true history of Indigenous peoples, so that the younger generations will know the challenges that were overcome by our people.

Bill sponsor Rep. Lente noted that Indigenous people have greatly contributed to New Mexico's rich and vibrant cultural history.

"This day is an act of restorative justice for our Indigenous communities, and it is a time to reflect on our understanding of our country's history, both the good and the bad. New Mexico's Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos are what truly make us the Land of Enchantment, and I look forward to the

Governor signing this important bill so we can properly honor our indigenous communities,” said Rep. Derrick J. Lente.

Sen. Shendo, Jr., who introduced the bill on the Senate floor on Friday, stated that the passage of the bill acknowledges the first peoples of the State of New Mexico and their contributions, resiliency, and perseverance.

“We fully support this measure as a means to honor our ancestors, culture, and traditions and to honor our strength, perseverance, and prosperity. We thank the House and Senate members for their support and look forward to celebrating this special day with other tribes,” said Vice President Lizer.

The New Mexico House of Representatives approved the bill with a vote of 50-12, and the Senate voted 22-15 in support of the measure. The bill will be sent to Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham for consideration. If approved by the Governor, the state of New Mexico will join a growing number of states that observe Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

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