



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navajo Utah Water Settlement Act moves forward

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer commend the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for advancing S. 1207, the Navajo Water Rights Settle Act of 2019, on Wednesday.

On April 15, the bill was introduced by U.S. Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT) and co-sponsored by Sens. Martha McSally (R-AZ) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ). The bill seeks Congressional approval of the settlement agreement to resolve the water right claims of the Navajo Nation in the state of Utah.

“We commend the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for supporting the bill. Many of our Navajo citizens in the state of Utah still lack clean running water in their homes. This settlement will bring much-needed water infrastructure to sustain our Navajo communities,” said President Nez. “We also express our appreciation to the Utah Congressional delegation, Utah Governor Gary Herbert, and the legislation co-sponsors for their support.”

If approved, the bill will provide approximately 81,500 acre-feet per year of surface and groundwater in the Upper Colorado River Basin. The law will also provide funding for water infrastructure for Navajo communities in Utah, including Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Red Mesa, Naa’tsis’ áán, Oljato, and Dennehotso.

“This is a step forward to bring water infrastructure for our Navajo Utah citizens and communities. The Nez-Lizer Administration continues to urge the 116th Congress to approve the bill that would help and improve the lives of many Navajo citizens,” said Vice President Lizer.

President Nez added, “This has been a long and overdue process to address the needs of Navajo Utah citizens. This settlement has been negotiated since 2003, and in 2015, the settlement was approved by the state of Utah. In 2016, the Navajo Nation Council approved the settlement. Congressional consideration is the last step to overcome the adversities our Navajo Utah citizens have encountered.”

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