



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**Nez-Lizer commend Governor Ducey for signing bill to create
the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls study group**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation First Lady Phefelia Nez, Second Lady Dottie Lizer, Arizona Speaker of the House Russell Bowers, Arizona Rep. Jennifer Jermaine (LD-18), and supporters of H.B. 2570 at the Arizona Capitol in Phoenix, Ariz. on March 11, 2019.

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Myron Lizer express their appreciation to Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey for signing H.B. 2570 into law on Tuesday. H.B. 2570 creates the first study committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in the state of Arizona. The bill was introduced by Arizona Rep. Jennifer Jermaine (LD-18) to determine how to reduce and end violence against Indigenous women and girls in the state.

“Our Navajo women are the center of our society, and they offer love, comfort, and discipline. However, an alarming number of Indigenous women and girls disappear or fall victim of murder each year. Our Indigenous women are murdered at a higher rate than the national average and more likely to experience violent crimes and sexual assault,” said President Nez.

First Lady Phefelia Nez and Second Lady Dottie added that the law would help shed light on cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women, and the study has the potential to create a better understating of the problem and help to develop solutions.

The study committee will establish methods for tracking and collecting data on violence against Indigenous women and girls. Additionally, the study committee would review policies, practices, prosecutorial practices, and barriers to track violent crimes committed against Indigenous women and girls.

“In the past, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls have received little or no attention. The lack of accurate data contributed to many problems, including the lack of prosecution and lack of coordination among local, state, and tribal law enforcement,” said Vice President Lizer.

The study will be completed in June 2020 with the collaboration of seven Arizona tribes, the Indigenous Peoples Caucus, Arizona attorney general, Arizona Department of Public Safety, county governments, tribal leadership and law enforcement, victim advocates, social workers, counselors, and legal and health service professionals. Upon completion of the study, the results and policy recommendations will be presented to tribal and state leadership.

“We extend our appreciation to Governor and Arizona leadership for supporting H.B. 2570. This law is a step forward to protect all Indigenous women, including Navajo women and girls,” added President Nez.

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