



The Navajo Nation  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**President Nez advocates for renewable energy, youth, and economic partnerships in address to the Arizona State Legislature**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez addresses the 54<sup>th</sup> Arizona State Legislature during the 25th Annual Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day at the Arizona Capitol in Phoenix, Ariz. on Jan. 15, 2020.

**PHOENIX, Ariz.** – On Wednesday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez delivered a powerful message to the 54th Arizona State Legislature in which he spoke about the Navajo Nation’s new vision for energy development, the importance of caring for Navajo youth and providing more educational opportunities, and partnering to create more economic opportunities for the state of Arizona and the Navajo Nation.

President Nez delivered the address during a joint session of the Arizona House and Senate at the State Capitol, where tribal and state leaders came together for the 25th Annual Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day.

“One-year ago today on January 15, 2019, Navajo Nation Vice President Myron Lizer and I took the sacred oath of office bestowed upon us by the votes of the Navajo people. Today marks the one-year anniversary of our administration’s time in office and we are proud to report that our Nation continues to move forward on a positive path based on the concepts of unity, hope, and resilience,” said President Nez.

He noted that the Navajo Nation has over 350,000 enrolled members and anticipated that number to be a lot higher when the 2020 Census count is completed. In the Phoenix metropolitan area, there are well over 35,000 members of the Navajo Nation and that number continues to grow as well.

“We are becoming a greater force in every election across this state and this great country of ours. We have many of our Navajo people who are contributing great things to our state and across the country. We have more and more Navajo people who are medical doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers, and we have even more who are enrolled in NAU, ASU, and UofA,” President Nez added.

In reference to the closure of Navajo Generating Station and the Kayenta Mine, President Nez called for support of the creation of a just transition fund by the Arizona Corporation Commission.

“Power plants across the country continue to close and communities and people are being impacted. Recently, I met with the members of the Arizona Corporation Commission and called on them to establish a just transition fund, to help offset the financial impacts and shortfalls for communities affected by the closure of power plants. For the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe, the closure of NGS and Kayenta Mine have real impacts. We ask for your support and your advocacy to push forward with the creation of a just transition fund,” stated President Nez.

During the visit to the State Capitol, President Nez and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council joined Arizona State Reps. Bob Thorpe (R-Dist. 6) and Arlando Teller (D-Dist. 7) for a press conference, where they spoke about an upcoming bill to reform the way in which the state’s Transaction Privilege Tax revenues are distributed. In his address to the State Legislature, President Nez asked the legislators to support a fair distribution of the revenues for tribes.

“When it comes to the Transaction Privilege Tax in the state of Arizona, tribes continue to seek a fair share of the revenue that so many of our tribal members contribute to. These funds can be used to develop much needed infrastructure, public safety, and education much like the tens of millions that tribes contribute to the state through gaming,” President Nez said.

He also spoke about the importance of working together to support youth amongst all tribes to build a stronger and prosperous future for our children and generations to come.

“To my fellow tribal leaders who are with us today, we know that our children are precious and they are the future of our people. We know that life can be tough, especially for our children. In those challenging times it’s important that we remember the teachings of our elders — it’s important that we be united and show strength for our children to overcome the modern-day

monsters like alcohol, drugs, depression, suicide, and other issues that many of our precious children deal with each day,” President Nez stated, who also recognized and thanked State Reps. Arlando Teller and Myron Tsosie, and State Sen. Jamescita Peshlakai — all members of the Navajo Nation.

Other tribal leaders who spoke during the joint session included Havasupai Vice Chairman Matthew Putesoy and Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. President Nez was joined by First Lady Phefelia Nez, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, and Council Delegates Kee Allen Begay, Jr., Nathaniel Brown, and Vince James.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanked the House and Senate members including Arizona House Speaker Russell “Rusty” Bowers, Senate President Karen Fann, and many others for welcoming the Navajo Nation and working together to bring positive changes that benefit the Navajo people and the state of Arizona.

To view President Nez’s full address to the Arizona State Legislature, please click on the following link: <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/Portals/0/FILES/Latest%20News/Address%20to%20the%2054th%20Arizona%20State%20Legislature.pdf>.

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