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For Immediate Release

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Navajo Nation First Lady Supports ‘Violence Against Family Act’ *To Join Walk for Stop Violence Against Women Day*

Window Rock, AZ—In collaboration with the Navajo Nation Advisory Council Against Domestic Violence, First Lady Martha Shelly announced today she supports the Violence Against Family Act (Act) and will join the ‘Stop the Violence Against Women Day’ walk and other events on Wednesday.

To bring awareness to the Act, First Lady Shelly intends to present it to Navajo Nation Council (NNC) Delegates Katherine Benally (Dennehotso, Chinchilbeto, and Kayenta) and Joshua Lavar Butler (To Nanees Dizi) for sponsorship of the legislation and introduction for approval by the NNC at the chambers in the morning at 9:00 a.m.

The Office of the First Lady is committed to educating and empowering victims of domestic violence. “We have been actively working on the Violence Against Family Act, which has been in development for the past ten years and we are confident it will be passed by the Navajo Nation Council,” said First Lady Shelly. “I encourage everyone to come out and join us to advocate for the rights of victims and families of domestic violence.”

According to the Act, it will provide for the safety and protection of family members from violence. The criminal justice system shall respond to family members with fairness, compassion and in a prompt and effective manner. Family violence is contrary to the traditional Navajo way of life and is a violation of fundamental human rights.

The initial core group of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council Against Domestic Violence comprises of members from the Division of Social Services; Battered Families and Home Shelter staff from Shiprock, Kayenta and Crownpoint; Judicial Branch; Window Rock Police Department; and the Public Defender’s Office.

WHAT: The First Annual Navajo Nation Stop the Violence Against Women Day Events & Walk

TIME: **8:30 a.m.**

Walk begins at the Window Rock Police Dept. and ends at the NNC chambers.

Followed by an invocation, welcome address by Lorena Halwood, guest speaker First Lady Shelly and other speakers sharing their stories of domestic violence

9:00 a.m.

First Lady Shelly and supporters will present the Violence Against Family Act to NNC Delegates Katherine Benally and Joshua Lavar Butler

WHEN: Wednesday, July 20, 2011

WHERE: Navajo Nation Council Chambers, Window Rock, Arizona

For more information or about booths contact Lorena Halwood at: 928-349-1769, or Elarina Nakai at: 505-368-1548.

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