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**April 6, 2007**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## Speaker Morgan recognizes the loss of 119-year-old Emma Begay

PREWITT, N.M. – Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan (Iyanbito/Pinedale) wholeheartedly offers his condolences to the family of 119-year-old Navajo elder Emma Bodie Begay who passed on peacefully in her sleep at 12:35 a.m. Friday, April 6, 2007.

“Mrs. Begay passing is a great loss to the Navajo Nation,” Speaker Morgan said. “I offer my condolences to the family during this difficult time.”

Speaker Morgan said Mrs. Begay’s passing is a great loss because of all the 119-year-old Navajo teachings that she possessed are gone with her.

Rosita Smith, granddaughter and family spokesperson, added that her masaani (maternal grandmother) “left us on Good Friday.”

Smith, a Prewitt, N.M. resident, said that her masaani was an outgoing, hardworking, spiritual Navajo woman who spoke the English language beautifully.

Each day she greeted the dawn at 4 a.m., and would sing songs as she tended to her morning house chores, Smith said remembering her late masaani.

Mrs. Begay was born in a hogan in the Mariano Lake-area in New Mexico during late autumn in 1888 to Edibah Charley, according to Smith. Her clans are Tlogi’ (Zia-Weaver Clan) and she was born for Deeshchii’nii (Start-of-the-Red-Streak Clan).

She said her masaani was a weaver, shepherd, farmer and a homemaker. Mrs. Begay reared 12 children, and three have survived her. Mrs. Begay has 20 grandchildren, and she has countless great-grandchildren, great-great grandchildren and a fifth generation of grandchildren respectively.

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Mrs. Begay was married to Santiago Begay, who was originally from Alamo, N.M., and he passed on during 1974.

An Emma Bodie Begay family meeting is scheduled for 4 p.m. tonight, April 6, 2007 at the Baca Chapter House. Another family meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday, April 7, 2007 at Baca Chapter House.

Services are to be announced by the family.

Smith and her family members are respectfully requesting donations to help with the burial services.

The Office of the Speaker will offer assistance to the family to help the family members during this difficult time.

For information to donate to the family, please call Smith at 505-287-0741 or send to Post Office Box 127, Prewitt, N.M. 81045.