

Navajo Nation Council Office of the Speaker
Contact: Sararesa Begay, Public Information Officer
(928) 871-6384
sararesabegay@navajo.org
<http://www.navajonationcouncil.org>

March 5, 2007
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Speaker Morgan offers congratulations to long-time New Mexico
Senator John Pinto for dedicated service to the Navajo Nation

SANTA FE - Navajo Nation Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan gave his appreciation to New Mexico State Senator John Pinto for "his endless service to his constituents of the Land of Enchantment" on Wednesday when the New Mexico State Senate honored Sen. Pinto for his 30 years of service in the Legislature.

With the Speaker's address he expressed that, "senator Pinto has set an example that must be taken notice of, as a servant of the people," Morgan said. "By his tireless effort in working for the people from serving his chapter as chapter president, secretary, treasurer, and then to McKinley County Commissioner. Today, he has served as a New Mexico State Senator for 30 years.

Speaker Morgan along with council delegates Ervin Keeswood Sr. (Tse Da Kaan), Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon/Mexican Springs), and Philip Kinlichee, legislative adviser, also attended the honoring of Sen. Pinto. The Navajo delegation presented Sen. Pinto with a turquoise silver bracelet and a Navajo Nation Seal Pendleton blanket to express their gratitude for his dedication and meaningful work in advocating for the Navajo Nation.

Speaker Morgan said Sen. Pinto (D-Tohatchi) "has always been at the forefront as a State Senator by serving on committees that most affects the welfare of his constituents."

-more-

Page 2-2-2/Begay/Senator Pinto

“McKinley and San Juan Counties are very rural areas that are in need of economic and telecommunications development,” Morgan explained. “Also for our miners and people who are affected by radioactive and hazardous materials to insure that their welfare is first, and foremost.”

Speaker Morgan stressed that “education is important to all of us and this is why he is a strong advocate for formal education.”

“His love and compassion for his people and the Navajo Nation is one that no man can take away from him and this is why, he is the Chairman of the Indian and Cultural Affairs, along with being the Co-Chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee.”

Sen. Pinto said he was surprised by the recognition of his legislative colleagues, the Navajo leadership and his family members.

“It was wonderful,” Sen. Pinto said, noting that 200 people attended his honoring event. He said it was special for him because his family including his wife and some of his grandchildren attended the event.

Sen. Pinto said that he is working diligently with Sen. Lynda M. Lovejoy (D-Crownpoint) on infrastructure development projects in the areas of building senior centers, and projects for power line, water and irrigation.

“We want to take the capital outlay improvements back to the Navajo people,” Sen. Pinto explained. Another special project he has is making U.S. Hwy. 491 a four-lane highway.

“That’s one of my top priorities,” Sen. Pinto said. “I’m also working very well with Sen. Lovejoy on getting a new Navajo Nation Transportation Building constructed in the Tse Bonito, N.M.-area.”

Sen. Pinto highlighted that he’s working harmoniously with Sen. Lovejoy, and appreciates that she is an experienced leader who focuses on rural infrastructure building and improvements. He also added that Rep. Ray Begaye (D-Shiprock) is one of his valued legislative colleagues.

The committees that Pinto are involved in are the Conservation Committee; Economic and Rural Development and Telecommunications Committee; Welfare Reform Oversight. He serves in an advisory capacity for the Legislative Education Study Committee and the Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee. He is the co-chair for the Indian Affairs Committee, and chairman of the Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee.

Speaker Morgan also indicated that Sen. Pinto is always has always been on the forefront as a state senator.

Speaker Morgan added, “Brother, thank you for your continual service to your constituents and the people of the Navajo Nation.”

Sen. Pinto is one of many senior statesmen in the New Mexico legislature.