



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 8, 2018

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### **Navajo Nation Council's commitment to the Navajo people reflected in \$100 million investment for waterlines, electric lines, and capital projects**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On April 17, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council unanimously approved an expenditure plan to invest over \$100 million from the Síhasin Fund for Navajo communities and families across the Navajo Nation to receive power lines, water lines, and various capital projects. On Monday, President Russell Begaye signed the Council's resolution, and also line item vetoed \$833,333 for the construction of a BIA road in Rock Point and \$350,000 for the planning of a BIA compound in Shiprock.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said the investment is a reflection of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council's commitment to helping the Navajo people and to the Nation's infrastructure development.

When the Navajo Nation received \$554 million from the federal government as part of a settlement agreement in 2014, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council created the Síhasin Fund in order to grow the balance. The Council then held a series of public hearings to hear directly from the Navajo people as to how the funds could be invested.

"The results of the hearings overwhelming showed that the people want water lines, power lines, and other basic infrastructure – this Council listened to the Navajo people. This Council initiated and approved a \$180 million investment in bulk water projects in 2015, and a \$150 million investment into economic development, community development, and water projects in 2016. The fact that the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council has invested more dollars into infrastructure than any other time is a reflection of our commitment to the people," stated Speaker Bates.

Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh), who first spoke of the idea of the investment plan months ago, said the \$100 million will not only help many people in need of basic infrastructure, but it will also increase tax revenue, create jobs, and help further develop communities for future developments.

"With this \$100 million investment, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council is looking years down the road, and planning for the future of our people and the Great Navajo Nation. We did this for every grandma out there who has no running water and electricity, for every child that has to do their

homework in the dark, and for anyone who has to struggle everyday just to meet their basic needs.” said Delegate Damon. “It was this Council that put this plan together and pushed it forward and I am thankful to my colleagues for supporting it.”

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