



The 22nd Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

Contact: Michael Wero, Communications Director

Phone: (928) 871-7160

February 27, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

nccpress@gmail.com
www.navajonationcouncil.org

Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize Seeks Improved Economic Balance

Comments made at ground breaking for Northern Edge Casino Resort

Upper Fruitland, NM — At last Friday's ground breaking of the Navajo Nation's third casino operation, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize reminded the audience that while gaming operations are an increased presence, this industry should only be a part of developing more economic opportunities for families and their communities.

"Let's not make gaming our only economic development tool, said Speaker Naize. "We also have people already working in a variety of small businesses from arts and crafts to raising livestock and farming."

However, mentioned Naize, since the Nation is operating casinos, we still need fairness when negotiating future gaming compacts with Arizona and New Mexico.

"I want to assure that the Council will continue to fight for the best share of economic opportunities for the Navajo Nation. But we also need to include our tribal neighbors and make sure our enterprises are protected at the state and federal level."

He also remarked on the need for better economic balance with border towns.

"Every weekend Navajos come into town, like Farmington, especially the first of the month. The same with Gallup, same with Page, same with Flagstaff...we need to reverse some of that money flow."

"We come into town and we practically take over the city of Farmington after tribal pay day," continued Naize. "We want the city to know that we want the same cooperation, to let them know we have a lot of resources on Navajo."

The Northern Edge Navajo Casino located just outside Farmington city limits will host a 120-seat restaurant, 52-seat bar, 750 slot machines and table and poker games. It is scheduled to open next January, 2012.

###