



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## President Shelly praises Rep. Kirkpatrick for tribal advocacy on Capitol Hill



Top, President Shelly praises Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick for her advocacy on Capitol Hill. Bottom, Rep. Kirkpatrick is sworn-in by Judge Carol Perry inside the council chamber. (Photo by Michele Morris)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—On the morning of Feb. 9, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined Speaker LoRenzo Bates, members of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council and the general public for the special Navajo swearing-in ceremony for Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.).

The Navajo Nation Council hosted the event.

Administering the oath of office was Judge Carol Perry. The Twin Warriors Society of Ft. Defiance provided color guard duties and the students of Dine’ Bi’ Olta recited the Pledge of Allegiance in Navajo.

Council delegate Jonathan

Nez served as master of ceremonies and provided the welcome address.

Nez thanked Rep. Kirkpatrick for working with the Navajo Nation and for being the people’s voice on Capitol Hill.

President Shelly said it’s rare for a congressional leader to go above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of Native Americans.

Rep. Kirkpatrick was raised on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, which she said shaped her understanding and appreciation of the issues facing tribes today.

“The Navajo Nation is thankful

for all that you have done for us,” President Shelly said. “We showed our appreciation for you at the voting polls this past year.”

He noted that residents in the Western Agency of the Navajo Nation were particularly grateful, after 27 miles of dirt road on Navajo Route 20 was paved in 78 days, connecting the Navajo communities of Bodaway-Gap, Coppermine and LeChee.

The roadway on U.S. Route 89 collapsed on Feb. 20, 2013. N20 was eventually selected as the detour route to restore essential traffic and the decision was made to pave the road.

The Navajo Nation worked with Arizona Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to get the \$35 million project completed.

“But it was Rep. Kirkpatrick that lobbied in Washington, D.C. and secured the funding to make the project a reality,” President Shelly said.

While the highway improved the quality of life for thousands of Navajos in one portion of the Western Agency, Rep. Kirkpatrick is also working to assist tribal members in another portion of the agency.

In Jan., Rep. Kirkpatrick traveled to Ariz. with a congressional delegation from the U.S. House of Representatives to discuss issues facing the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe with the Office of Navajo Hopi Indian Relocation in Flagstaff.

The members of the House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee on the Interior and Environment traveled to the Navajo and Hopi Reservations

to see conditions firsthand and meet with tribal leaders.

During their Window Rock visit, President Shelly advocated for residents raising livestock for their survival. Recent livestock seizures by the Hopi Tribe have reawakened a generations old divide between the two tribes, he said.

“For many Navajo families living on (NPL, HPL and Bennett Freeze), raising livestock is a way of life and the only means of survival in those remote locations,” he said.

However, the president said he was confident that Rep. Kirkpatrick would find an amicable resolution to the livestock seizures.

Such advocacy has garnered praise for the “Navajo Nation’s Congresswoman” throughout her term of office. The oath of office ceremony in the Navajo Nation Council Chamber was an opportunity to say thanks to a hardworking congresswoman.

“It’s very rare to have a politician in Washington, D.C. that cares about tribal issues. The Navajo Nation is fortunate to have one in Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick,” President Shelly said.

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