



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director  
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer  
(928) 274-2758

[nnopvp.communications@gmail.com](mailto:nnopvp.communications@gmail.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 16, 2019

**State of the Navajo Nation Address highlights strategic plan,  
budget priorities, and calls for large investment in scholarship funding**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer present the State of the Navajo Nation Address during the Summer Council Session in Window Rock, Ariz. on July 15, 2019.

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer presented the State of the Navajo Nation Address to the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council, during the opening day of the 2019 Summer Council Session in Window Rock, Ariz.

The State of the Navajo Nation Address highlighted several important matters including the official introduction of the Hozhó Diné Bi Nahat'á strategic plan, which outlines the Nez-Lizer Administration's plan for the upcoming years and also aligns the priorities of the Navajo people with the tasks and responsibilities of each division under the Executive Branch.

On Jan. 28, President Nez and Vice President Lizer presented the administration's priority listing, which is based on the priorities and needs of the Navajo people. Since then, the Nez-Lizer Administration has developed a more detailed comprehensive plan that outlines specific tasks, goals, and accountability measures for each division. Last week, the Office of the President and Vice President invited the members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council to a presentation of the planning document and to allow for input from the Council members.

"This plan that we put forth is based on the Navajo philosophy of Nitsáhákees, Nahat'á, liná, and Síhasin and it provides accountability measures to hold ourselves accountable for making changes," said President Nez. "We visited over 70 chapters before taking office and we had the opportunity to listen to the people – to hear their issues and concerns and this Hozhó Diné Bi Nahat'á document is the result."

President Nez and Vice President Lizer also called for the Nation's largest investment in scholarships using available funds in the Síhasin Fund to create innovative scholarship opportunities by partnering with colleges and universities, and creating endowments, trust funds, student loan repayment programs, and requiring scholarship recipients to work for the Navajo Nation in the future.

In reference to the FY2020 Comprehensive Budget for the Navajo Nation, they stated that , the Executive Branch is striving to put forth a fiscally responsible budget based on prudence, meeting direct services, eliminating excessive spending, promoting "Buy Navajo, Buy Local," and eliminating the duplication of services.

"Since taking office, we directed each Division Director to develop their respective budgets to meet the direct service needs of our elders, youth, disabled, and others who rely on the Nation for a hand-up, without any layoffs," stated President Nez.

He added, "We have also directed Division Directors to hold their department and program managers accountable for work-related travel off the Navajo Nation, which includes working to eliminate meetings, conferences, and trainings that are held at sites off the Navajo Nation."

President Nez and Vice President Lizer received applause from the audience when they spoke of the need to construct a convention-style facility on the Navajo Nation to host and accommodate major events and conferences, which would also go a step further in promoting the administration's "Buy Navajo, Buy Local" initiative.

The State of the Navajo Nation Address also highlighted the introduction of a bill by Congressman Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) expand the benefits under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to include Navajo uranium mine workers.

"We have many of our people who have passed on and some who are still suffering due to uranium exposure in one way or another, and it is the responsibility of the federal government to provide compensation to those who are impacted. We will continue our work to get this bill passed," they added.

Other items included in State of the Navajo Nation Address included a call to extend the Navajo Nation's two-percent "junk food tax" to continue benefitting the health and wellness of our Navajo people through local projects, support for current legislation to construct a youth center in the community of Shonto, the Nation's recent success in finalizing a federal disaster declaration agreement, public hearings for communities in Navajo Partitioned Lands over grazing permits, missing and murdered Indigenous relatives initiatives, and more.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council voted 18-2 to accept the State of the Navajo Nation Address and the Hozhó Diné Bi Nahat'án document. To view the State of the Navajo Nation Address, please visit: <http://opvp.navajo-nsn.gov>.

###

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.