



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:  
Jared Touchin, Communications Director  
(928) 274-4275  
Crystalyn Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer  
(928) 274-2758

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 11, 2019

**First Lady and Second Lady support Arizona bill to create the first study committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation First Lady Phefelia Nez, Second Lady Dottie Lizer, Arizona Speaker of the House Russell Bowers, Arizona Rep. Jennifer Jermaine (LD-18), and supporters of H.B. 2570 at the Arizona Capitol in Phoenix, Ariz. on March 11, 2019.

**PHOENIX** – Navajo Nation First Lady Phefelia Nez and Second Lady Dottie Lizer visited the Arizona House of Representatives to offer their support of H.B. 2570 on Monday, which would create the first study committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in the state of Arizona. The bill was introduced by Arizona Rep. Jennifer Jermaine (LD-18) to determine how to reduce and end violence against Indigenous women and girls in the state.

First Lady Nez and Second Lady Lizer stated that the bill is fully supported by the Nez-Lizer Administration as a step to protecting all Indigenous women, including Navajo women and girls, and to shed light on cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

“Our Native women are the center of our societies and they offer nurturement, comfort, and love. However, an alarming number of Native women and girls disappear or fall victim to murder each year. Our Native women are murdered at a higher rate than the national average and more likely to experience violent crimes, rape, and sexual assault,” said First Lady Nez. “This bill could help address the absence of studies on the issue and to gain a true understanding of the problem.”

If approved, the study committee would establish methods for tracking and collecting data on violence against Indigenous women and girls. Furthermore, the committee would review policies, practices, prosecutorial practices, and barriers to track violent crimes committed against Indigenous women and girls.

“A number of factors contribute to the problem including poor data collection, lack of prosecution, and the lack of coordination with law enforcement. With the passage of H.B. 2570, we are hopeful that we can work together to advocate and secure resources and funding to address this devastating issue,” said Second Lady Lizer.

According to the bill, upon completion of the study, the committee would propose measures to ensure access to culturally appropriate victim services for Indigenous women and girls who have been victims of violence. The committee will also submit a report with policy recommendations to address the issues identified in the study.

The Arizona House of Representatives passed H.B. 2570 with a unanimous vote of 60-0. The bill will be considered by the full Senate next.

###

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.