



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FCC grants Navajo Nation temporary access to
broadband spectrum to help during COVID-19 pandemic**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer extend their appreciation to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for granting temporary access and use of an unassigned spectrum to provide more broadband service on the Navajo Nation, to help with the COVID-19 response efforts.

“With the temporary closure of schools, work places, and some businesses, there is a growing need for more broadband support for those working from home and for all of the essential and frontline workers who continue to serve our people. We are truly thankful for the support of FCC Chairman Ajit Pai and other officials for making this possible,” said President Nez.

“I am pleased that we can provide this temporary spectrum access to the Navajo Nation,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “Tribal communities are having to adjust to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic while already facing some of the greatest challenges caused by the digital divide that we see anywhere in the nation. As with any community — rural or urban — tribal members are having to work from home and to rely increasingly on telemedicine and remote learning as they practice social distancing to minimize the spread of the virus on their reservations. This additional spectrum should help the leaders of the Navajo Nation meet the needs of its people during this challenging time. I wish all the Navajo people health and wellness, and I remain committed to helping them bridge the digital divide.”

On March 31, the FCC appointed Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Executive Director Christopher Becenti, to serve as a member of the FCC’s Native Nations Communications Task Force to represent tribal communities throughout the country, including the Navajo Nation. The task force’s mission is to provide guidance, expertise, and recommendations to specific requests from the FCC on a range of telecommunications issues that directly or indirectly affect tribal governments and their people.

“We extend our appreciation to Chairman Pai for the appointment of Christopher Becenti. We are confident that he will do an outstanding job and contribute to the ongoing efforts to increase telecommunications infrastructure and technology services throughout Indian Country. As an

Executive Director, Becenti has helped to improve the Navajo Nation’s telecommunications development for Navajo citizens and first responders,” said Vice President Lizer.

Christopher Becenti has extensive knowledge and comprehensive experience related to telecommunications for tribal communities. Becenti also serves as a technical advisor for the Tribal-Interior Budget Council’s Data Management Subcommittee. Under his direction, the Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission has worked to implement FirstNet, wireless emergency alerts, and Lifeline services on the Navajo Nation.

“It is an honor to serve on the task force along with other dedicated communication professionals throughout Indian Country. I am looking forward to working with tribal communities to address telecommunication issues and concerns,” said Becenti.

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