



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Nez-Lizer proposes \$177 million in remaining CARES Act funding  
for immediate relief for Navajo families, students, elders, and others**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer are requesting the support of the Navajo people for Legislation No. 0209-20, introduced on Friday, which will provide \$177 million of the remaining CARES Act fund to help Navajo students, elders, families, and others impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The legislation includes the following:

- \$4 million for Navajo Nation Shopping Centers, Inc., to provide tenant and property safety improvements at all ten shopping centers to mitigate the threat of COVID-19 and exposure to employees and the public. Navajo citizens will have the opportunity to shop safely at Navajo shopping centers.
- \$35 million for emergency relief and assistance for Navajo college graduate and undergraduate students. Due to COVID 19, time-sensitive financial support was delayed for students, which caused financial challenges for student enrollment and the purchases of school supplies and tuition.
- \$25 million for housing initiatives, including housing improvements in the Former Bennett Freeze Area (FBFA). Navajo leadership continues to support Navajo individuals and families within the FBFA.
- \$3 million to enhance technological services to improve coordinated responses for Navajo Nation employees and students through the Department of Diné Education
- \$4.3 million for the installations of plexiglass/vinyl, IT support, purchase of tablet devices, and air ventilation for Head Start centers on the Navajo Nation to protect staff and students from the coronavirus.
- \$5 million for the Navajo Nation Division of Social provides hardship assistance for Navajo school-age children to purchase school supplies, tablet devices, laptops, school clothing, and other financial burdens caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- \$10 million for the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services provides emergency financial assistance for Navajo vulnerable elders and individuals with disabilities. Relief may include past-due utility bills, rent, mortgages, isolation expenses, and other financial burdens caused by the coronavirus.
- \$5 million for the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services to transition remotely to serve over 15,000 clients to avoid the exposure of COVID-19.
- \$15.4 million for immediate connectivity and information sharing resources via Verizon satellite internet in the proximity of all Navajo Nation chapters for families to respond to COVID-19 crises.
- \$7.4 million for propane and natural gas services to homes or refilling bottles as a COVID-19 relief service for the upcoming winter season.
- \$15 million for solar projects for households on the Navajo Nation, including the Former Bennett Freeze Area. The project will be completed through a partnership with Native Renewables, a non-profit organization that provides clean energy for Native American families.
- \$5 million to address solid waste disposal that will enhance Navajo communities' sanitation and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- \$1 million for Navajo Nation Information Technology to procure professional services to oversee broadband/telecommunication developments to address technology during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- \$602,206 for in-vehicle internet connection for Navajo Nation Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Service, and emergency management to respond to COVID-19 crises.
- \$10 million for the Office of the Controller (OOC) to promptly administer and manage the federal CARES Act funds.
- \$653,000 for the Office of Management and Budget to assist OOC and other departments to administer the federal CARES Act funds.
- \$29.9 million for emergency financial assistance for Navajo members, elders, and individuals with underlying health conditions to purchase food, disinfecting supplies, pay past due utility bills, rent, mortgages, isolation expenses, and other financial burdens caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This week, President Nez and Vice President Lizer presented the funding proposal to the Navajo public during live online town hall meetings on the Nez-Lizer Facebook page to provide transparency and outreach for the Navajo people of the CARES Act funding expectations.

"Since March, the Administration has prioritized the health and well-being of Navajo citizens. Moreover, the CARES Act funding proposals created by the Administration have always reflected the immediate and essential needs of our Navajo people to respond to the invisible monster, called the coronavirus, that has come onto our homeland. Our focus has to remain on the individuals, families, and elders who need assistance the most. The coronavirus has emotionally, physically, spiritually, and financially impacted many Navajo citizens. The second phase appropriation of the CARES Act is geared to help with direct services," said President Nez.

In March, Congress approved \$8 billion of the CARES Act fund for tribes to help address COVID-19, and on May 6, the Navajo Nation received the first CARES Act allocation of \$600,559,530.10. On June 16, the Nation received the second allocation of \$86,358,877.04, and on June 18, the third allocation of \$27,271,224.33 was received. The Navajo Nation has received a total of \$714,189,631.47.

On July 4, President Nez and Vice President approved two separate resolutions, CJN-46-20 and CJN-47-20, in the amount of \$62,059,530.10 of the CARES Act funds for special duty pay, personal protection equipment for frontline workers, disinfecting of government facilities, and more to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation.

On Aug. 16, President Nez and Vice President Lizer approved \$476,666,192 through CJY-67-20, which is approximately 67% of the CARES Act funds received, for water line projects, power line projects, solar power projects, internet access to remote areas, business assistance, and more resources to help the Navajo people during the COVID-19 pandemic. The remaining amount of \$176,463,214.37 will be used to create a second phase appropriation to provide direct relief services and resources to the Navajo people.

"As we visited all the 110 communities on the Navajo Nation, we heard of the hardships and pleas of our Navajo people. Many families and elders have been experiencing financial burdens, such as paying for rent, food, essential items, utility bills, and many others, since the pandemic. Also, many of our children and families are struggling to prepare for virtual learning. Many of our students do not have tablets, laptops, or internet capabilities to complete their assignments. As leaders, we have to develop plans that will directly help our people in need," said Vice President Lizer.

The Nez-Lizer Administration looks forward to presenting Legislation No. 0209-20, sponsored by Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. to the 24th Navajo Nation Council.

"As of now, all tribes have until Dec. 30, 2020, to use the CARES Act funds. We are optimistic that Congress will consider and approve an extension, but until then, we are on a strict timeline to expend and use the funds for COVID-19 response efforts. Over several months, we have received numerous funding requests from our Navajo people for direct services. We don't have much time left, so we trust that the Council will act on this request quickly. As the Council considers the proposal, please contact your Council Delegates and respectfully ask them to expeditiously pass Legislation No. 0209-20 with little or no amendments," added President Nez.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer request the Navajo people to submit supporting comments for Legislation No. 0209-20, by email to [comments@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:comments@navajo-nsn.gov) and [navaionationpubliccomments@gmail.com](mailto:navaionationpubliccomments@gmail.com).

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