



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director  
(928) 274-4275

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

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

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 1, 2020

**Nez-Lizer seek support for \$177 million expenditure plan provides immediate COVID-19 relief for Navajo families, students, elders, and others**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer are requesting the Navajo peoples' support for Legislation No. 0209-20, which puts forth a plan to provide \$177 million of the remaining CARES Act funds to provide direct financial assistance to Navajo students, elders, families, and others impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Legislation No. 0209-20 includes the following:

- \$35 million for emergency relief and assistance for Navajo college graduate and undergraduate students.
- \$25 million for housing initiatives, including housing improvements in the Former Bennett Freeze Area (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.
- \$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.

- \$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.
- \$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.

Legislation No. 0209-20 is currently eligible for consideration by the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council's Standing Committees. President Nez and Vice President Lizer respectfully request the Council members to move the proposal through the legislative process to address the immediate relief of Navajo students, elders, vulnerable individuals, and families.

"The final CARES Act funding proposal created by the Nez-Lizer Administration reflects the immediate and essential needs of our Navajo people related to the coronavirus. The fight against the virus is not over, and many people are experiencing the financial, emotional, and physical burdens caused by the pandemic. We must join together to move the legislation forward, so our people can get the immediate help they need," said President Nez.

On July 4, President Nez and Vice President approved two separate resolutions, CJN-46-20 and CJN-47-20, that were previously approved by the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council totaling over \$62 million in 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 over \$476 million in CARES Act funding through resolution CJY-67-20, 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 the CARES Fund will be used to provide direct relief services and resources to the Navajo people. Since March, we have visited all 110 communities on the Navajo Nation, and we heard the hardships and pleas of our Navajo people. The pandemic is like nothing we have dealt with before. However, we are strong, compassionate, and resilient people, and we will overcome this by working together," said Vice President Lizer.

Overall, the Navajo Nation received over \$714 million in CARES Act funds: \$600 million on May 6, \$86 million on June 16, and \$27 million on June 18. Approximately \$537 million in CARES Act funds has been approved and signed into law, leaving a remaining amount of \$176 million, which the Nez-Lizer Administration is proposing to use these funds to directly help Navajo students, elders, families, and others impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through Legislation No. 0209-20, which is sponsored by Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., and co-sponsored by Council Delegates Herman Daniels, Jr. and Vince James.

The Navajo people are asked to submit supportive comments for Legislation No. 0209. Please feel free to copy and paste the following sample comment and submit via email to [24thNNC@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:24thNNC@navajo-nsn.gov) and [comments@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:comments@navajo-nsn.gov) and [navajonationpubliccomments@gmail.com](mailto:navajonationpubliccomments@gmail.com). Please indicate your full name and chapter affiliation.

"I write in support of Legislation No. 0209-20 to move forward with the \$177 million expenditure plan to help Navajo students, elders, families, and others impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please vote in support of the legislation and move it forward. Thank you."

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