



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

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**Navajo Nation leaders honor and thank longtime
U.S. Senator Tom Udall as he delivers farewell address**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation leaders honor and thank longtime U.S. Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.), who delivered his farewell address on the Senate floor in Washington D.C., as he prepares to leave office next month. Sen. Udall previously served as New Mexico’s Attorney General, five terms as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and became a member of the Senate in 2008. He did not seek re-election in this year’s election.

“Senator Udall has been a champion for the Navajo people and Indian Country on many critical issues over the years including land conservation and restoration, uranium mining clean-up and health impacts, and with the COVID-19 pandemic on the Navajo Nation. I cannot thank him enough for his great leadership and for always advocating and supporting the Navajo people. As the Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, he continues to support and address many issues for all tribal nations. I wish him and his family the very best as they move forward,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

Sen. Udall spoke about what he has learned from tribal leaders and communities, and bipartisan collaboration to meet federal trust and treaty obligations during his work as Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

“As I talk about my love of the land, I cannot neglect to acknowledge how much I have learned from the original stewards of this land – Native Americans. I got my start in politics working with my father, fighting alongside the Navajo uranium miners who had been hurt by this nation’s nuclear weapons program. My work as Vice Chair of the Indian Affairs Committee has been the honor of a lifetime. The federal government’s obligation to uphold its trust and treaty obligations is sacred. Some of my proudest achievements have been the result of working with tribal leaders to advance Indian Country’s priorities and to support New Mexico’s 23 Tribes,” stated Sen. Udall.

“The progress and legacy created by Senator Udall and his office will continue on long after he leaves office. He has helped many of our Navajo people during his year’s public service. I had the honor of meeting and working with Senator Udall in the last few years and he has always been great to work with on many issues. To him and his family, I say thank you and I pray for your continued good health and well-being,” said Vice President Myron Lizer.

Several members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council also thanked the outgoing Senator and recalled their work together over the years.

“I’ve known Senator Udall for many years and he has always welcomed leadership and community members to the table on many issues. He has always been willing to listen and to help resolve issues for our communities. His passionate leadership and vast knowledge will be missed, but he has laid the groundwork for us to continue working on many initiatives. I thank him, his staff, and his family for their service and dedication and wish all of them the very best,” said Council Delegate Mark Freeland.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty also paid tribute to Sen. Udall and recalled his unwavering support for former uranium mine workers and their families.

“Sadly, many of our Navajo people worked in uranium mines while unknowingly being exposed to radiation and toxic materials that have led to multi-generational health issues and deaths since. Senator Udall has always stood by our former uranium mine workers and downwinders that continue to deal with the devastating health effects caused by uranium. He was also very instrumental in raising the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women issue to the national level. These are only a few of the many issues that Senator Udall has championed over the years. I am truly thankful to him and I am honored to have worked alongside him,” stated Delegate Crotty.

Longtime Council member and former McKinley County Deputy Sheriff Edmund Yazzie also thanked the Senator for his leadership and partnership over the years.

“During my time as McKinley County Deputy Sheriff and going back to the time of the 88-member Council, Senator Udall has been a great partner on many issues including public safety, infrastructure development, and much more. We will truly miss his courage and advocacy at the federal level. I wish Senator Udall well and I pray for his continued success as he moves on from the Senate,” Delegate Yazzie stated.

To view Sen. Udall’s farewell speech, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFkbhTeBHzM&feature=youtu.be>

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