



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Nez-Lizer continue to support for Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women taskforce initiatives

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, First Lady Phefelia Nez, and Second Lady Dottie Lizer continue to support and work collaboratively with the Arizona Study Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force, and to advocate for the establishment of Utah's task force to study violence against Native American women.

"As leaders, we commend all the three states for recognizing the need to locate our missing relatives throughout Indian Country, including the Navajo Nation. Throughout our tribal nations, we hear far too many stories of families, victims, survivors, and service providers of the overabundance of violence against our sacred women, children, and relatives," said President Nez.

"Most importantly, this is not only a missing persons issue, everyone needs to be a part of the discussion and solution to keep our families and relatives safe and protected," added President Nez.

First Lady Nez, a member of the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force, met with members of the Arizona Study Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Kim Russell of Indian Health

Services and Debbie Nez Manuel, a social worker with tribal, state, and local organizations, and Stephanie Salazar, who assists with the New Mexico's task force to begin the process of collaborating with the task forces.



PHOTO: Navajo Nation First Lady Phefelia Nez meet with members of the Arizona Study Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force on Feb. 18, 2020.

“It is important for all the task forces to be working together because many of our tribal communities extend into Arizona and New Mexico. To meet the urgency of this problem, it is crucial to have comprehensive reports and findings to begin the process of healing and restoring families,” said First Lady Nez, who also continues to focus on community-based projects and tribal programs that help Navajo families and children to help prevent and offset the impacts of social issues. She also thanks the many community-based groups and volunteers who contribute their time and resources to moving these efforts forward.

“This is a national issue, and we also commend President Trump and his administration for implementing ‘Operation Lady Justice,’ an aggressive, government-wide strategy to determine the best practices for collecting data on missing and murdered indigenous persons. This initiative gives hope to all tribal communities that justice and restoration are being sought,” said Second Lady Lizer, who was joined by Vice President Lizer during the signing of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons executive order in November.

In relation to Utah H.B. 116 sponsored by Rep. Angela Romero (D -26), the Office of the President and Vice President fully supports to establish the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and LGBTQ+ Task Force that impact the nine Navajo communities in the state of Utah.

“Our key focus is to work with each task force and provide resources and networks to identify barriers and challenges to keep our children, families, and relatives safe. It is important to have all task forces work together. We also continue to pray for our Navajo people to heal, restore, and reunite with one another,” said Vice President Lizer.

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