



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Approval of policy changes for the Navajo Veterans Housing Program will expand housing options



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer were joined by Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council members, Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director James Zwierlein, and Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety Executive Director Jesse Delmar on Thursday, as they signed Resolution CJY-46-21 into law, which expands the opportunities of the Navajo Veterans Housing Program under the Navajo Veterans Administration.

In 2018, the Navajo Veterans Housing Program was established to initiate the process of building suitable homes for Navajo veterans using a portion of the Veterans Trust Fund income. To improve the program, the Nez-Lizer Administration, under the leadership of Director Zwierlein began developing partnerships with organizations to build quality homes for veterans and others.

“Many of our Navajo people have answered the call to duty to defend this country and the Navajo Nation. We appreciate and honor their service and sacrifice, and the contributions they continue to make in our communities. Many of them continue to serve in leadership roles and to advocate for grassroots issues. Our administration has made it a priority to work with veterans and the Council to improve the Navajo Veterans Trust Fund to expand home ownership options and to repair more homes,” said President Nez.

The resolutions states that 50-percent of the four-percent from projected revenues received from taxes, oil, gas, mining, minerals, timber, land rentals, interest, and dividends will be allocated to the Navajo Veterans Housing Program. The other 50-percent will be allocated into the Veterans Trust Fund. It also allows the program to build as many homes within a year for veterans, living or living off the Navajo Nation.

“On behalf of veterans, we thank President Nez, Vice President Lizer, and James Zweirlien for supporting the program since its establishment. For many years we have advocated for results and today we stand in a hogan that will help us. I’ve seen the walls and roof go up, and it brought joy and hope that it is finally happening. Ahe’hee’ for supporting veterans,” said Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council Chair George Tolth.

“The previous policy stated that only 15 homes within the five veterans agencies could be constructed, which made the process very challenging at the local veterans offices. Therefore, we explored innovative approaches to make the program a reality and not just a concept. With the partnership with the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters Union from Arizona and New Mexico, we created the opportunity to manufacture modern hogans on the Navajo Nation,” said Zwierein.

This month, the Navajo Veterans Administration and the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters Union from Arizona and New Mexico will complete the first hogan-style prototype to demonstrate the structure to veterans and others who may be interested in owning one of the homes.

“We need to push this initiative forward, and we need support to allocate funds through the American Rescue Plan Act to develop housing manufacturing facilities throughout the Navajo Nation. We also call upon our Navajo citizens to help such an important cause that impacts each of our communities,” said Vice President Lizer.

The Nez- Lizer Administration thanks 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr., for sponsoring the legislation.

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