



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**President Nez and Vice President Lizer
deliver the State of the Navajo Nation Address**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer presented the State of the Navajo Nation Address virtually to the 24th Navajo Nation Council on Monday, during the opening day of the Summer Council Session. The written report is available online at: <https://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov>.

In regards to the ongoing drought, President Nez said he is very thankful for the moisture that the Navajo Nation has received recently and also assured the public that the Navajo Nation is deploying resources and personnel to repair windmills and earthen dams, and also to help rescue feral horses and other livestock by providing water and other necessities.

President Nez also recognized and thanked the Navajo people, first responders, and many others for their commitment to complying with the Navajo Nation public health emergency orders. He also urged the public to get fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and to continue wearing masks, due to the growing concerns and spread of the Delta variant across the country.

“Today, the Delta variant continues to spread throughout the country and within our own communities. As of last week, there were 11 confirmed cases of the Delta variant within the Navajo Nation. While the variants continue to pose a threat everywhere, the Navajo Nation is proud to have the highest vaccination rate anywhere in the country! We are now closer than ever to achieving community immunity – or herd immunity – with nearly 70% of the eligible population fully vaccinated on the Navajo Nation. That is something to be proud of,” said President Nez.

He also noted that under the leadership of Office of the President and Vice President Chief of Staff Paulson Chaco, the Nez-Lizer Administration’s infrastructure team is vetting projects to develop a comprehensive listing that currently includes over 9,000 projects at a cost of over \$20 billion. The Division of Community Development has also received 558 projects from chapters for the American Rescue Plan Act, most of which prioritize bathroom additions for families. The next step is to continue working together to develop a comprehensive listing.

“Our people are right when they say that water is life. We see what is happening all over the southwest. We are getting less and less moisture every year, our lakes and ponds are drying up and our wells are depleting. NTUA is now issuing protocols and asking our people to conserve

water in our communities. The American Rescue Plan Act gives us the opportunity to invest in water development, water conservation, and water infrastructure to help sustain our water resources for years and generations to come. As our leaders long ago did, we must look to the future and plan for the generations to come. \$1.8 billion isn't enough to build our entire Nation, or to make everyone happy, but we can help to build our foundation and prepare it for our children and theirs to come. We have to think beyond our immediate situation and prepare for what challenges and possible future pandemics may occur," said President Nez.

The State of the Navajo Nation Address also highlighted the Diné Atiin Bahane: Navajo Road Emergence White Paper, which is a document developed by the Nez-Lizer Administration that requests the federal government to enact seven specific policy changes to improve the Navajo Nation's transportation system. Last Thursday, President Nez once again presented the document to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg.

"We should not have to wait years for right-of-way clearances and approvals from the federal government to move forward with road projects. We are, by far, the most over-regulated population in this country. We put forth an op-ed in the Washington Post that outlines our concerns and recommendations when it comes to federal regulations, and it has captured the attention of officials in Washington D.C. So, we will be meeting with them soon to continue advocating for changes that would give more authority to our own Navajo Division of Transportation. Over the years, the Navajo Nation has built its own capacity and expertise to oversee regulations. With Congress now considering a new infrastructure bill, we need these changes to move projects forward," President Nez stated.

The State of the Navajo Nation Address also highlighted several recent accomplishments including the reopening of the Gentle Ironhawk Shelter, which was facilitated by the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services and is now in operation under the Utah Navajo Health Systems, Inc.

The Nez-Lizer Administration also continues to work with the White House and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland to convey our support of the full restoration and expansion of the Bears Ears National Monument to 1.9 million acres. Several other priorities include the extension and expansion of the Radiation and Exposure Compensation Program beyond 2022, delivery of water and power for Navajo families in the Westwater Subdivision in Blanding, UT, and allocating \$50 million from the Nation's Síhasin Fund for scholarships for Navajo students.

The 24th Navajo Nation Council accepted the report by a vote of 18-3, which is available online at: <https://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/From-the-Office/State-of-the-Navajo-Nation>.

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