



## The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Deb Haaland becomes the first Native American confirmed to lead the U.S. Department of the Interior**

**WINDOW ROCK, AZ** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer are pleased to congratulate Deb Haaland, a member of the Pueblo of Laguna, in becoming the first Native American to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior under the Biden-Harris Administration.

“This is an unprecedented and monumental day for all First People of this country. Words cannot express how overjoyed and proud we are to see one of our own confirmed to serve in this high-level position. It’s a wonderful feeling that we can now refer to her as Madam Secretary. Today’s historic confirmation sets us on a better path to righting the wrongs of the past with the Federal government and inspires hope in our people, especially our young people. It gives us a seat at the table to offer a new and different perspective from a person that has experienced the reality of adversities and challenges of growing up on what Federal officials refer to as ‘Indian reservations.’ On behalf of First Lady Phefelia Nez and our family, we congratulate Secretary Haaland and her family,” said President Nez.

In November, President Nez publicly supported Congresswoman Haaland’s nomination stating, “As a member of Congress, she has been a strong voice for all tribal nations and the people of New Mexico on a wide variety of issues including land management, clean energy, economic development, social justice, and job creation. Her ability to weigh the issues from social, economic, and political standpoints is unique and something that is not easily found.”

Vice President Myron Lizer joined President Nez praising Secretary Haaland’s appointment stating, “Second Lady Dottie Lizer and I congratulate Secretary Haaland and look forward to working with her and the rest of our Federal partners to address some of the challenges related to the protection of Federal lands, water resources, education, and many others. To have one of our Native American people in this prestigious position is heartwarming and long overdue.”

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