



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

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director  
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer  
(928) 274-2758

[nnopvp.communications@gmail.com](mailto:nnopvp.communications@gmail.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 15, 2021

### **Navajo Nation Applauds President Biden's Executive Order to Advance Efforts to Address Missing Native Persons Cases**



**WASHINGTON D.C.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and First Lady Phefelia Nez commended U.S. President Joe Biden for issuing a new Executive Order during the opening day of the White House Tribal Nations Summit on Monday, directing federal officials to work hand in hand with Tribal Nations and Tribal partners to build safe and healthy Tribal communities and to support comprehensive law enforcement, prevention, intervention, and support services to help address missing and murdered Indigenous people.

“With today’s Executive Order, President Biden continues to fulfill his commitment to tribal nations that will help to strengthen coordination between all agencies to help locate and resolve missing persons cases in tribal communities. Far too many of our Navajo people continue to endure the heartache and frustration of a missing loved one. We have to continue to work together to do more for our people. We thank President Biden, Secretary Haaland, and all grassroots and community advocates,” said President Nez.

First Lady Nez commended the signing of the Executive Order and said more needs to be done to address missing persons including the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, to help resolve jurisdictional issues that arise in cases involving violence against Navajo women by non-Navajo perpetrators.

“We appreciate President Biden and First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden’s, support for all missing and murdered Indigenous relatives across the country. The Executive Order will help agencies at the federal, state, and tribal levels to better communicate and work together to address data sharing and collecting, responses by law enforcement, and support for families of missing persons,” said First Lady Nez.

The order states, “Generations of Native Americans have experienced violence or mourned a missing or murdered family member or loved one, and the lasting impacts of such tragedies are felt throughout the country. Native Americans face unacceptably high levels of violence, and are victims of violent crime at a rate much higher than the national average. Native American women, in particular, are disproportionately the victims of sexual and gender-based violence, including intimate partner homicide.”

“Today, I’m directing federal officials to work with tribal nations on a strategy to improve public safety and advanced justice,” Biden said at the White House’s first-ever Tribal Leaders Summit. “This builds on the work we did together on reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act in 2013, when we granted authority to tribes to exercise jurisdiction over non-Indian offenders who commit violence on tribal lands. We’re going to reauthorize that again, we’re going to expand the jurisdiction to include other offenses like sex trafficking, sexual assault and child abuse.”

On Tuesday, President Nez will participate in a panel discussion regarding tribal priorities on the second day of the Tribal Nations Summit. For more information regarding the Executive Order, please visit the White House website: <https://www.whitehouse.gov>.

###

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.