



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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## **President Nez offers support for concerns brought forth by the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer extend their appreciation to the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability for bringing their concerns forth to leaders of the Navajo Nation, during a press conference held in Window Rock, Ariz. on Wednesday.

Navajo Nation Executive Branch Chief of Staff Paulson Chaco, Division of Human Resources Executive Director Dr. Perphelia Fowler, and Fiscal Recovery Fund Office Interim Director Tom Platero were present, while President Nez attended the funeral service for World War II veteran Bennie S. Cowboy, to offer their support and information regarding the Navajo Nation’s ongoing work to address needs for the disabled community.

“I appreciate the leadership of Hoskie Benally Jr., President of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability, for bringing the concerns to the members of the Navajo Nation Council and the Executive Branch. As leaders, it is our responsibility to work together to address these issues. Last week, Vice President Lizer and I signed a resolution into law approving \$260,000 for new vehicles to provide transportation services for Navajo people with developmental disabilities. That’s one example of working together to support our people,” said President Nez.

In September, the Navajo Nation Council approved numerous Conditions of Appropriations in the FY2022 Comprehensive Budget, directing the Executive Branch to address several issues including access to public buildings for disabled individuals — a critical need that the Executive Branch continues to work on dating back many years. The Condition of Appropriation was line-item vetoed because the directive was not supported with additional funding and because the Division of General Services is already working to increase access to facilities.

Within the FY2022 Comprehensive Budget, President Nez approved carryover funding to conduct a comprehensive facilities and buildings assessment and evaluation, which will help to improve ADA requirements for public facilities as well.

The Division of General Services has prioritized over 160 ADA immediate projects to be addressed at numerous tribal offices throughout the Navajo Nation, which includes ADA restroom renovations, entrance additions, doors, stairs and ramps replacements, sign upgrades, drinking fountain accommodations, seating upgrades, and parking, sidewalk installations, and parking improvements. Approximately 50 ADA projects, totaling \$350,000, on the priority listing have been completed.

“Access to public facilities, housing, health care needs, and other services are in need of improvement here on the Navajo Nation and across the country. The American Rescue Plan Act funds provide us with that opportunity to address some of those needs and create long-term solutions for all of our Navajo people, including those who are disabled. We’ve put forth a plan that would provide funds for hardship assistance, infrastructure development, mental health services, and many critical needs and services. All of this will require the support of our Council members and we look forward to those discussions as the legislations are introduced for American Rescue Plan Act funding,” added President Nez.

President Nez said he is open to exploring funding options to increase available funds to continue those efforts. The Office of the President and Vice President thanks the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability and looks forward to continuing working together.

The Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability serves as an advocate for individuals with disabilities and their families. The NNACOD is composed of individuals with disabilities, representatives of the public and private service providers, and other groups concerned with disability-related issues. The council advocates for equal access to employment, education, housing, public safety, communication, recreation, health, and social opportunities.

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