



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

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## New Mexico tribal leaders work to move forward together on redistricting issues



**PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez addresses tribal leaders at the Indian Pueblo Culture Center in Albuquerque, NM on Oct. 11, 2021.**

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.** – On Monday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council members, and the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Office met with the All Pueblo Council of Governors and Jicarilla Apache Nation at the Indian Pueblo Culture Center in Albuquerque, N.M., to talk about ongoing redistricting efforts for the state of New Mexico.

“It’s critical that the Navajo Nation and all New Mexico tribes stand united when it comes to redistricting for the state of New Mexico. Just as we saw with the recent successful restoration of the Bears Ears National Monument, we are stronger when we stand together and advocate on a government-to-government basis with states and at the federal level. I thank the leaders of each

tribal nation for coming to the table and sharing their concerns and recommendations, so that we can move forward together,” said President Nez.

Among numerous recommendations, President Nez spoke about the need to protect the voices of Native American voters, to make voting polls more accessible for voters including those who reside in remote areas, and ensuring that Native American voters are represented in each district.

24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon, Council Delegates Daniel Tso and Wilson Stewart, Jr., and Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Executive Director Leonard Gorman were in attendance to offer support and recommendations for the redistricting plans.

On Sept. 30, President Nez also went before the New Mexico Citizen Redistricting Committee and spoke about the importance of protecting and strengthening Native American voting rights and access to voting. The Citizen Redistricting Committee is an independent, non-partisan body tasked to develop and propose district maps for New Mexico’s congressional delegation, Senate, House of Representatives, and the Public Education Commission every 10 years after the census. The committee is tasked with collecting public comments about the redistricting maps and proposing plans to the state legislature by Oct. 30.

“In the 2020 election, Native American voices were heard and we impacted elections locally and nationally. We have to keep that momentum going to ensure that we have representation and leadership that reflect the people and priorities for each district. We will continue to work together with tribal nations to move us forward,” added President Nez.

In the state of New Mexico, approximately 12-percent of the total state population is comprised of Native American people. The Navajo Nation has 48 chapter governments in New Mexico within McKinley, San Juan, Cibola, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Bernalillo, and Socorro Counties.

President Nez has also participated in several public hearings with the Arizona Independent Redistricting Committee and continues to work closely with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to advocate for the Navajo Nation’s position on redistricting plans. To view the New Mexico Citizen Redistricting Committee’s proposed maps or to submit a comment, visit: <https://www.nmredistricting.org>.

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