



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

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## **Navajo Nation's FY2022 Comprehensive Budget approval includes funding for veterans, prosecutors, and direct services**

**MANY FARMS, Ariz.** – On Monday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was joined by Vice President Myron Lizer in Many Farms, Ariz. as he signed into law the Navajo Nation's fiscal year 2022 Comprehensive Budget through Resolution CS-49-21, which includes full funding for veterans, prosecutors, and many more direct services for elders, youth, and community needs. The FY2022 Comprehensive Budget was approved by the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council by a vote of 18-3 on Sept. 10, and will go into effect on Oct. 1. The three branch chiefs allocated approximately \$177 million in General Funds for the branches of government.

"We thank the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Damon, Divisions and programs, and all of the support staff who provided assistance and support for the past several months as this budget moved through the process. We understand that there are many needs in our communities and for our people and together we spent a great amount of time deliberating and making tough decisions. With this budget, we want to continue on the path of working together to address any remaining issues and concerns," President Nez said.

President Nez approved funding for veterans in each of the five agencies to help provide direct services and assistance. He added that he is open to working with veterans and Council members to improve funding policies and procedures that hinder benefits.

"I am very thankful to our Navajo veterans, our warriors, for bringing forth their concerns to leadership last week. We sign this funding into law and we will continue meeting with veterans to work toward more solutions to address concerns. The Veterans Housing Program received approval last week from the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee to move the program forward to begin building homes for veterans. If there are any concerns with the budgets, we will sit down and talk through those issues with our veterans and Council members," said President Nez.

The FY2022 Comprehensive Budget signed by President Nez also approves full funding for the Office of the Prosecutor, and carryover funding from the previous fiscal year that will provide an additional minimum amount of \$320,000.

“Many concerns were raised during the Council’s budget session and among our Navajo people over the need for more funding for the Office of the Prosecutor. With this budget, we are fully funding the requested amount and at least an additional \$320,000 to help serve and protect our people. Perpetrators of crimes need to be held accountable for their actions, but we also need the support of the Judicial Branch once cases are moved forward from the Office of the Prosecutor,” said President Nez.

With personnel savings from FY2021, the budget provides a three-percent general wage adjustment for all Navajo Nation employees and \$2.6 million in additional funds for various needs for the upcoming fiscal year, including new vans to help deliver meals and provide transportation for Navajo elders, operational costs for judicial courts, personnel and operating expenses for the Office of the Public Defender, Office of the Prosecutor, and Criminal Investigations, chapter stipends for four out of the five agencies, Diné bizaad college fund, and the personnel and operating costs for the Navajo Police Department.

The budget resolution also supports carryover funding from FY2021, in addition to FY2022 budget allocations, for the Office of the Auditor General, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Public Defender, Office of the Prosecutors, Solid Waste Management Program, Community Housing and Infrastructure Department, Regional Business Development Offices, Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support, School Clothing Program, Navajo Police Department, and others.

President Nez also used the line-item veto authority for \$881,000 for the Department of Criminal Investigations because the department will receive approximately \$1 million in carryover funding that is included in the Comprehensive Budget. If there is a need for additional funds, President Nez is open to discussing options. He also removed \$1.3 million for Capital Outlay Match funding citing the need for accounting of current fund balances. Several conditions of appropriations were also removed, however, President Nez said that he understands the needs and concerns and will work with the proper divisions and programs to address those matters.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council for their support of the FY2022 Comprehensive Budget and looks forward to continue working together to develop solutions that address concerns and other funding needs.

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