



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:
Jared Touchin, Communications Director
(928) 274-4275
Crystalyn Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 274-2758
Timothy Benally, Public Information Officer
(928) 871-7000
inopvp.communications@gmail.com

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Navajo Nation recognizes the month of April as “Navajo Nation Sexual Assault Awareness Month”

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Friday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, First Lady Phefelia Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Second Lady Dottie Lizer signed a proclamation to recognize the month of April 2022 as "Navajo Nation Sexual Assault Awareness Month" to acknowledge victims, survivors, and advocates and to increase awareness and prevention of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment in Navajo homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

The proclamation recognizes that crimes of sexual assault, rape, and sexual harassment impact the mental, spiritual, and physical well-being of victims, survivors, and families. Sexual assaults include all sexual conduct or behavior that occurs without an individual's consent.

"During Navajo Nation Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we renew our commitment to ensure that every Navajo citizen can live a safe life without the threat and impact of sexual violence. The consequences of sexual assault are severe, ranging from physical, mental, and emotional trauma. Each of us plays a role in protecting those we love, including our grandparents, parents, spouses, daughters, and sons. We must recommit ourselves to ending sexual violence and supporting all survivors and victims to begin the process of healing for families and communities," said President Nez.

The proclamation states that the crime of sexual assault reported to the Navajo Nation Police Department is an average of 1 new case every day. The U.S. Department of Justice reported that American Indians and Alaska Natives are 2.5 times as likely to experience violent crimes and at least two times more likely to experience rape or sexual assault crimes than all other races and nationalities.

"Anyone can be a leader in preventing and ending sexual violence in the Navajo Nation. We must protect each other, especially when an accusation is made – we must believe the victims and investigate to the fullest extent. Let us be the voices of survivors and victims. Navajo women and children are sacred, and supporting and protecting each other can save many others from this violent crime. One of the strongest forms of support is demanding justice for victims and survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. Most importantly, we have to honor the bravery and

advocacy of survivors and their families to end violence on the Navajo Nation," said First Lady Nez.

The proclamation also calls on all Navajo organizations and community members to help prevent sexual violence and support survivors of sexual assault by promoting the values of K'é (kinship), Hozhó, equality, and respect. Navajo citizens have a fundamental right to be safe from sexual assault and violence in their homes, schools, workplaces, online, and within every walk of life.

"Sexual violence is a major public health, human rights, and social justice issue that requires more attention. These terrible crimes are committed indiscriminately in relationships, workplaces, schools, and public areas. No individual should ever endure such pain, anxiety, and fear. We must stand together and spread awareness that sexual assault is not acceptable," said Vice President Lizer.

The proclamation also acknowledges and appreciates all grassroots organizations and groups committed to raising awareness and prevention of sexual assault crimes and cases in our Navajo communities.

"If you or anyone you know is experiencing these types of sexual threats and impacts anywhere, including online or social media spaces, call the police and reach out to someone you trust. Sexual assault is a crime and is not something that should be taken lightly or ignored. We pray for the survivors, victims, and their families, and may God continue to heal you and your families," said Second Lady Lizer.

The month of April is also National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. For more support, information, or advice, call the free and confidential National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1(800)-656-HOPE.

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THE NAVAJO NATION

Proclamation

RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF APRIL 2022 AS “NAVAJO NATION SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH”

The Navajo Nation hereby recognizes the month of April 2022 as “Navajo Nation Sexual Assault Awareness Month” to acknowledge victims, survivors, and advocates, and to increase awareness and prevention of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment in Navajo homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

WHEREAS, the crimes of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment cause undeniable and ongoing harm to Diné people, families and communities; and

WHEREAS, the crime of sexual assault reported to the Navajo Nation Police Department is an average of 1 new case every day; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Justice reported that American Indians and Alaska Natives are 2.5 times as likely to experience violent crimes – and at least 2 times more likely to experience rape or sexual assault crimes, compared to all other races; and

WHEREAS, Navajo children, women, LGBTQI, and vulnerable populations are at increased risk for victimization and harm of sexual assault and violence; and

WHEREAS, Crimes of a sexual nature affect the mental, spiritual, and physical well-being of victims, survivors, and families; and

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month calls on all community members to help prevent sexual violence and support survivors of sexual assault by promoting the values of K’é (kinship), Hozhó, equality, and respect; and

WHEREAS, the Navajo citizens have a fundamental right to be safe from sexual assault and violence in their homes, schools, workplaces and within every walk of life; and

WHEREAS, Sexual Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault; Verbal Sexual Harassment and Intimidation is not within the teachings and principles of our Dine’ culture and tradition; and

WHEREAS, With the support of Navajo Nation leaders, community and spiritual leaders, and Navajo Nation programs and organizations, we can send the message that these crimes will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation acknowledges and appreciates all grassroots organizations and groups that are committed to raising awareness and prevention of sexual assault crimes and cases in our Navajo communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JONATHAN NEZ, President of the Navajo Nation, and **I, MYRON LIZER,** Vice President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2022 as “Navajo Nation Sexual Assault Awareness Month.”

PROCLAIMED THIS 1st DAY OF APRIL 2022


Jonathan Nez, *President*
THE NAVAJO NATION


Phefelia Nez, *First Lady*
THE NAVAJO NATION


Myron Lizer, *Vice President*
THE NAVAJO NATION


Dottie Lizer, *Second Lady*
THE NAVAJO NATION