



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**President and First Lady Nez advocate for the Navajo people  
in meetings with the New Mexico Governor and lawmakers**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez meeting with New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham at the Governor's Office in Santa Fe, N.M. on Feb. 4, 2022.

**SANTA FE, N.M.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez met with New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, House Speaker Brian Egolf (D-Dist. 47), and state legislators at the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe, N.M. on Friday, to advocate for legislative priorities on behalf of the Navajo Nation. State lawmakers began a 30-day legislative session on Jan. 18 to consider bills including the state's budget and issues that impact tribal nations.

President Nez and First Lady Phefelia Nez were also invited by state lawmakers to address the New Mexico House of Representatives. During his address, he spoke about several key issues including the importance of upholding voting rights and expanding access to voting for all eligible

voters, including elderly Navajo people who live in remote areas without immediate access to post offices and voting polls.

“In many states, there are proposed laws that aim to disenfranchise certain groups of voters, including Navajo voters. We should be making laws that expand access to voting for all eligible voters, no matter their party affiliation and no matter the color of their skin. So please, I ask all State Legislators to carefully consider the impacts of proposed voting laws and weigh them very carefully, and look into your hearts, and do what is right for all voters, including the First Peoples of this country,” said President Nez, who was joined by the First Lady and State Reps. Anthony Allison (D-Dist. 4) and D. Wonda Johnson (D-Dist. 5) in presenting a Navajo blanket to Speaker Egolf in appreciation of his leadership and service.

President Nez also affirmed the Navajo Nation’s support for House Bill 135, the State of New Mexico Indian Family Protection Act, sponsored by State Rep. Georgene Louis (D-Dist. 26), to support the Indian Child Welfare Act by implementing provisions at the state level to preserve and restore harmony and unity among families. He also thanked State Rep. Derrick Lente (D-Dist. 65) for sponsoring several education bills to push the tribal remedy framework and additional funding for education.



**PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and First Lady Phefelia Nez with Speaker Brian Egolf and State Reps. Anthony Allison and D. Wonda Johnson at the State Capitol in Santa Fe, N.M. on Feb. 4, 2022.**

He and the First Lady also requested the support of state legislators for Senate Bill 12, sponsored by State Sen. Shannon Pinto (D-Dist. 3), which seeks to create the position of Indigenous Persons Specialist within the Office of the New Mexico Attorney General.

In a meeting with New Mexico Gov. Lujan Grisham and New Mexico Secretary of Indian Affairs Lynn Trujillo, capital outlay funding, renewable energy initiatives, transportation projects, and COVID-19 mitigation collaborations.

“Governor Lujan Grisham has been a great partner and advocate for the Navajo people at the state and federal levels on many issues including the COVID-19 pandemic. We had a great discussion on many key issues and we will continue working together to ensure that the Navajo people benefit from capital outlay funding, infrastructure development, and other initiatives that are being considered during the legislative session,” said President Nez.

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