



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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Navajo Nation leaders mourn the loss of former Speaker and Vice Chairman Edward T. Begay

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer offer condolences and prayers to the family of Edward T. Begay, former Vice Chairman of the Navajo Nation and Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, who passed away in Albuquerque, N.M. on Sunday at the age of 87.

“On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we offer our condolences and prayers to Honorable Begay’s family. We also thank his loved ones for sharing his life with us and for all of their family’s contributions to our Navajo people. He was a very loving and caring person who always put the people first. We pray that his family takes comfort in knowing that he is with God and watching over them now,” said President Nez.



Begay is Tódích’íí’nii and born for the Tl’ogi clan, his maternal grandfather was Táchii’nii and his paternal grandfather was Kinyaa’áanii. He grew up in the Nose Rock area of what is now called “Superman Canyon” in New Mexico. Begay married his high school sweetheart, Cecilia M. Damon, in 1961. Together, they had two daughters, Sharlene Begay-Platero and Sandra Begay, and a son-in-law, John Platero, Jr. Begay’s beloved wife, Cecilia, died in 1991.

From 1971 to 1983, Begay represented the Church Rock and Breadsprings Chapters on the Navajo Tribal Council. During his career as Council Delegate, Begay chaired the Advisory Committee, the Education Committee, the Economic Development and Planning Committee, the Budget and

Finance Committee, and the Federal Restructuring Task Force. In 1982, Peterson Zah and Begay successfully campaigned for the offices of Navajo Nation Chairman and Vice-Chairman, serving Navajo Nation from 1983 to 1987. As Vice-Chairman, Begay gained a national perspective on issues affecting Native Americans, particularly the Navajo people.

On Sunday, Begay's family stated, "Ed T. was a loving husband, caring father, and gracious grandfather, but to many, he was Cheii. We will miss him at our dinner table, sitting next to us in church, and listening to his stories of the journeys his life has taken him on. We are extremely proud of his service to the Navajo Nation, the State of New Mexico, and his tribal home communities."

Vice President Lizer also offered condolences stating, "My wife, Dottie, and I offer our thoughts and condolences for Mr. Begay's family. We will always remember and cherish his legacy and all that he gave of himself to improve the lives of many. You are in our thoughts and prayers."

Services for Begay are pending. Sharlene Begay-Platero is the point of contact for the family and can be reached by phone at (505) 879-0392.

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