



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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President Nez approves \$3.6 million for the upgrade and replacement of the electrical system for Pine Hill School



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Division Directors with Ramah Navajo School Board members/staff for the signing of Resolution CAP-22-22 in Window Rock, Ariz. on May 9, 2022.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Monday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer were joined by Ramah Navajo School Board members in Window Rock, Ariz., as they signed Resolution No. CAP-22-22 into law to appropriate \$3.6 million from the Navajo Nation's Síhasin Fund to upgrade and replace the Pine Hill School's high-voltage electrical system, located in the community of Ramah, N.M.

The funding will resolve the school's reoccurring power outages and electrical problems caused by the current electrical system, which was installed in the early 1970's. The outages also affected other nearby facilities including the community's health center. In August, President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer visited the school and saw the electrical issues firsthand. Council Delegate Jamie Henio introduced the legislation, which was unanimously approved by the 24th Navajo Nation Council on April 21.

“This has been a longstanding issue for the students, teachers, and administrators. Today, we are proud to sign this bill into law to provide the funding that is needed to replace the electrical system and resolve the problem. We have many dedicated students that attend this school and they are the primary reason that we are signing the resolution into law. The Ramah Navajo School Board and Council Delegate Jaime Henio did a great job working with all partners to move the legislation forward,” said President Nez.

He also spoke about the need to approve and allocate the remaining American Rescue Plan Act funding for infrastructure projects to meet the 2024 federal deadline to use the funds, to secure building materials soon, and due to the short timeframe for the construction season.

“Our hope is that the Council will next approve Legislation No. 0086-22, to allocate \$1 billion in ARPA funds for more water, electric, broadband, and housing projects. The approval of several funding requests by our administration shows that we are willing to work together with the Council and reach compromises to put projects for the people first. Construction companies are waiting months for steel, windows, and other materials to become available and delivered to complete infrastructure projects. We have a federal deadline to use the ARPA funds by the end of 2024. Time is not on our side and we need the Council to act quickly by approving the bill. It’s critical that we move infrastructure projects forward quickly to secure materials and begin construction without further delay,” added President Nez.



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez views the electrical system in Ramah, N.M. on Aug. 6, 2021.

The Navajo Nation will also continue to seek reimbursement from the federal government for the electrical system, which is under the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Division of Community Development has worked closely with the BIA and BIE to have the system replaced using federal resources, but the need for replacement required immediate action to avoid greater problems for the school’s operations.

“We congratulate the students, board, and faculty of Pine Hill School and we will continue to support them as this project comes to fruition. The students are the ultimate beneficiaries of the collaborative effort. We also thank the 24th Navajo Nation Council for their support,” stated Vice President Lizer.

Navajo Nation Division of Transportation Director Garret Silversmith, Division of Social Services Director Deannah Neswood-Gishey, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Office Executive Director Tico Charlee, and Division of General Services Deputy Director Oliver Arviso were in attendance to offer their support for the resolution.

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