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**President Nez speaks on Capitol Hill in support of the
confirmation of Roselyn Tso to serve as the new Director of IHS**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez spoke in support of the confirmation of Roselyn Tso to serve as the next Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), during a hearing held by the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on May 25, 2022, in Washington D.C.

WASHINGTON D.C. – On Wednesday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez spoke in support of the confirmation of Roselyn Tso to serve as the next Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), during a hearing held by the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in Washington D.C. Tso is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from LeChee, Ariz. She is Deeschii'nii (Start of the Red Streak People) and born for Hashk'aa hadzohi (Yucca Fruit Strung Out). Her maternal grandfather is Tl'ogi Dine'e' (Zia Pueblo People) and her paternal grandfather is Tl'izi łání (Many Goats).

Tso, who currently serves as the Director of the Navajo Area IHS, was nominated by U.S. President Joe Biden in March to oversee the delivery of health care services to 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives and the management of \$7.4 billion in federal health care funds and 15,000 IHS employees across the country.

“Ms. Tso’s commitment to public service stems from her family experience, which included many of the challenges many families experience in Indian Country. Ms. Tso’s work ethic, value system, and approach to problem solving demonstrates the resilience of indigenous peoples, and the commitment to combat the systemic inequities that have impacted tribal nations since the western expansion. It is because of her extensive experience working with federal and tribal governments that we are



confident that she will continue to promote federal trust responsibilities and enhance our nation-to-nation relationship to improve the Indian health care service delivery throughout Indian Country. We fully support President Biden’s nomination of Ms. Tso to serve as the Director of IHS,” said President Nez.

He also spoke about Tso’s commitment to working together with the Navajo Nation and its health care professionals to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic, which helped to lower infections and led to the Navajo Nation having one of the highest vaccination rates in the entire world.

“As Director of the Navajo Area Office, Ms. Tso’s leadership, expertise, and compassion have been critical in reducing the spread of the coronavirus. When COVID-19 began spreading in the southwest, there were a lot of uncertainties and fear among everyone. We established a work group to begin mitigation efforts. Ms. Tso and her team were part of this group. Her quick response and steadfast leadership led to a well-coordinated effort with the Navajo Department of Health establishing public health orders even before the first COVID cases were confirmed on the Navajo Nation,” added President Nez.

Tso was joined by her family for Wednesday’s hearing, in which she highlighted the priorities that she would undertake if confirmed as the IHS Director including strengthening and streamlining health care services, improving tribal consultation, and improving accountability within IHS operations.

As the head of the Navajo Area IHS since 2019, Tso has provided exemplary leadership in the administration of a comprehensive health care system. She began her career with the IHS in 1984. She previously served in various roles in the Portland Area, both at the service unit level as the Administrative Officer for the Yakama Service Unit and at the Area level as the Planning and Statistical Officer, Equal Employment Officer and Special Assistant to the Area Director.

In 2005, Tso assumed the role of Director, Office of Tribal and Service Unit Operations for the Portland Area. In this leadership position, she was responsible for the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act and worked directly with tribes. Tso also worked with the three urban programs in the Portland Area that provide services ranging from

community health to comprehensive primary health care services. In addition, she previously served as Acting Director of the ODSCT in 2010 and 2016-2018.

Tso holds a Bachelor of Arts in interdisciplinary studies from Marylhurst University in Portland, Oregon, and a master's degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix, Portland, Oregon. Her nomination will be subject to confirmation by the United States Senate.

Tso's nomination to serve as the Director of Indian Health Service is subject to confirmation by the full U.S. Senate. President Nez thanks Chairman Sen. Brian Schatz, Sen. John Hoeven, Sen. Maria Cantwell, and Sen. Ben Ray Luján for attending the hearing. The hearing is available to view online at: <https://www.indian.senate.gov>.

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