



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs says she'll work directly with the Navajo Nation on critical issues



PHOTO: In her report before the 25th Navajo Nation Council Summer Session, Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs affirmed her administration's commitment to addressing water rights for tribes in Arizona.

Window Rock, Ariz. - During the opening day of the 25th Navajo Nation Council Summer Session, history was made when Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs presented a report before the Council, addressing water rights, broadband connectivity, and assuring the Council that their voices will be heard at the Arizona State Legislature.

Governor Hobb's visit marks the first time that a sitting Arizona Governor has provided a report during a Council session.

"On behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, I thank Governor Hobbs for providing a report before the Navajo people. On this historic day, Governor Katie Hobbs honored the Council by attending the Summer Session and engaging with our leaders on issues that impact the lives of our people," Speaker Curley said. "Her visit gives us hope for future partnerships and support on issues that are critical to the Navajo Nation."

Preceding her report, Governor Hobbs met with the 25th Navajo Nation Council as a group, where she listened to their concerns and requests for advocacy.

During the meeting, delegates addressed public safety, first responder substations, cross commissioning of Arizona police officers, school safety, water rights in Arizona, emergency response assistance for natural disasters, remediation of abandoned uranium mines, broadband expansion in relation to education, and voting rights.

In her report before the 25th Navajo Nation Council Summer Session, Governor Hobbs affirmed her administration's commitment to addressing water rights for tribes in Arizona and noted that Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Chief Legal Counsel Bidtah Becker has been appointed to the state Water Policy Council.

"Arizona must face the lack of investment that has faced Native peoples thus far. I believe in responsible water management. On this issue and more, we'll work directly with the Navajo Nation and other Native communities," she said. "We'll continue this work to ensure that Arizona and all Arizona tribes have an opportunity to thrive. I realize our shared goals and together we can move the state forward."

Governor Hobbs took two questions before Council from Delegates Shawna Ann Claw (Chinle) and Delegate Casey Allen Johnson (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake).

Delegate Claw asked how the Governor's Office plans to support veteran's programs and how they can help ensure resources are deployed to communities experiencing natural disasters. Delegate Johnson said the Navajo Nation needs her support on the water rights adjudication.

In her response, the governor said that across the board, her office and the state legislature will include tribal voices by enhancing the number of tribal liaisons within task forces.

"We'll make sure that tribal veterans get the services they are entitled to. We're able to provide support for natural disasters and emergency requests. Please reach out to us," Governor Hobbs said. "We are absolutely committed to re-engage with tribes on the water rights settlement, which has stalled at the state level. You have my work that we will be engaged."

On behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, Vince R. James (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kinlichee, Steamboat) presented the governor with an honorary gift of a traditionally made pottery. The Council and Speaker Curley gathered to present the gift.

"There are many issues that face our constituents in Chapters that lie within county boundaries. We need the state to come to the table to partner with the Navajo Nation to help support projects that will improve our communities," Speaker Curley said. "Today, Governor Hobbs told us that she'll continue to work directly with the Navajo Nation and other tribal nations to bring progress to the issues we presented."

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