



25th Navajo Nation Council

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Navajo Voters Coalition recognizes legislative achievement of 25th Navajo Nation Council**



**At the Navajo Voters Coalition Conference, Council Delegate Shawna Ann Claw emphasized the power of the Navajo Voter.**

**LEUPP, Ariz.** – On Tuesday, the Navajo Voters Coalition recognized the 25th Navajo Nation Council for their efforts to increase Navajo voter participation through emergency legislation that synced the dates of the Navajo Nation and Arizona state primary elections.

On behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, legislation sponsor Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez accepted the honorary recognition from the Coalition during the Navajo Voters Coalition Conference that was held at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.

“Navajo voters possess so much power that we must ensure our presence is known this election season,” Delegate Nez said. “It’s important for our Navajo Nation and our respective states, like Arizona, this primary and general election.”

Delegate Nez continued, “Working with the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors, the Council approved legislation to change the Navajo primary election date to be in sync with this year’s Arizona primary election.”

According to Navajo Election Code, the Navajo primary election is held the first Tuesday in



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August for every year in which a general election is held. On Feb. 9, 2024, Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs signed House Bill 2785 changing this year's Arizona 2024 primary election date to July 30, 2024.

Syncing the primary election dates optimizes Navajo voter turnout at the polls.

Coconino County District 5 Supervisor and conference emcee Lena Fowler said the Nation needs to continue educating the public about the date change and the important bills on this year's ballot.

"People are still under the impression that the Navajo primary date hasn't changed. We need to keep the word out there. Additionally, in this year's general election, we will have many voter decisions that have been added by state legislators. We need to get education out to our voters on these initiatives," Supervisor Fowler said.

Council Delegate Shawna Ann Claw also served as a keynote speaker at the event, emphasizing the collective power of Navajo voters and addressed the challenges they face.

"Sometimes our rights are complicated with challenges. Our elders laid the foundation to ensure our right to vote. Our vote can create change within our communities and nationally. Yet, on the Navajo Nation, we face obstacles in rural addressing, accessibility of polling locations, Navajo translation, and the redistricting of voter boundaries," Delegate Claw said. "Our people constantly overcome obstacles and disparities to show up at the polls. Let's continue to instill hope and motivation for our people to vote."

The 2024 Navajo Voters Coalition Conference offered presentations by Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes, Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Executive Director Tom Collins, Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Director Leonard Gorman, and Navajo Board of Election Supervisors Chairman Melvin Harrison.

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