



The Navajo Nation
Yideeskáadi Nitsáhákees

DR. BUU NYGREN *PRESIDENT*
RICHELLE MONTOYA *VICE PRESIDENT*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 26, 2024

CONTACT: George Hardeen, Public Relations Director

Email: george.hardeen@navajo-nsn.gov

Cell: 928-810-9174

Navajo President Buu Nygren welcomes Gov. Tim Walz to Navajoland with 10 days left of campaigning until election

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – One day after President Joe Biden formally apologized to Native Americans for America’s role in the “sin” known as the federal Indian boarding school system, the Navajo Nation welcomed Democratic vice presidential candidate Gov. Tim Walz to the Navajo capital.

“Governor Walz coming here today recognizes the voice of Native Americans and the huge impact we will have at the polls this year,” Navajo Nation President told an estimated 750

Navajos who gathered before Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park beneath the huge sandstone arch the Navajo capital is named for.

“No election has been as important to the Navajo people as this one on November 5,” he said. “Thank you all for coming to the capital of the Navajo Nation today to help me welcome and

support our friend, the man generations of kids know as Coach – Governor Tim Walz.”

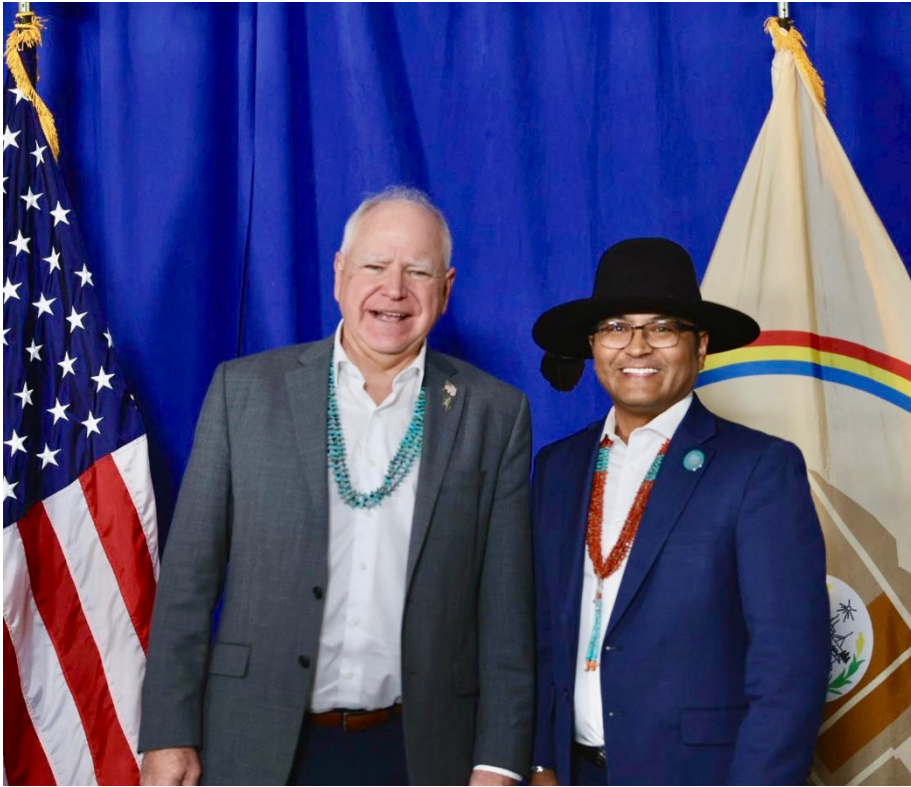


Democratic candidate Gov. Tim Walz visited the Navajo capital of Window Rock Saturday to campaign for Vice President Kamala Harris. Gov. Walz spoke before a estimated crowd of 750 Navajos and members of other Arizona and New Mexico tribes.

A CNN nation poll reported Saturday both Vice President Harris and former President Donald Trump are tied with 47% each, a historic first this close to election day.

President Nygren said unlike ever before, Arizona’s Navajo and Native voters will be crucial to determine the outcome of this year’s election.

Among the dignitaries to speak w Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, U.S. Sen. Mark Kelly, former Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and former Navajo Nation President and Congressional District 2 Democratic candidate Jonathan Nez. Former Arizona District 1 Congressman Tom O'Halleran attended, as well.



Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz

President Nygren said he was proud to cast his vote for Vice President Kamala Harris and Gov. Tim Walz as an Arizona delegate to the Democratic National Convention and would do so again.

"As Navajos, we have survived the Long Walk of the 1860s," he said. "Our veterans turned the tide in world wars. Navajos have lived through forced relocation. We continue to speak our Navajo language, and we are still here. We fight for and love our Navajo culture. Above all, from the signing of our Treaty of 1868 to every visit our leaders make to Washington, D.C., we hold the rainbow of our sovereignty in the highest regard."

To Navajos, the arc of a rainbow on the Navajo Nation Seal is revered and represents their sovereignty as a tribe and Nation.

Stepping to the podium, Gov. Walz took note of the flags of each military service at half-staff in honor of 107-year-old Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr., who died one week ago.

"The Navajo Nation and the nation of the United States lost a treasure in John Kinsel, Sr., one of the original Navajo Code Talkers," Gov. Walz said. "These flags are flying at half-staff. He served in Guam, Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima."

"I want to give a special thank you to all the Navajo Nation veterans as we stand on one thing," he said. "I want to recognize my fellow veterans in this, and I want to be clear to everyone, and I think you can't say this enough. Native Americans have served this country in uniform in every major conflict this nation has been in."

The Governor said he felt "a deep sense of gratitude to the Navajo Nation for having me on this land." Five weeks ago, President Nygren extended his invitation to the Harris/Walz campaign to visit the Navajo Nation.

"I understand that it is a privilege to be standing here on Navajo land," Gov. Walz said. "I am grateful that you would see fit during the year as we talk about your vote to make Kamala Harris president of the United States, for your incredible hospitality."

The Governor made a special appeal to Navajos and members of other tribes by citing his and the Vice President's records on behalf of tribal nations.

"I want to be clear and make sure you hear it and that the country hears it," he began. "Kamala Harris and I recognize the promises this country has made to Indigenous peoples. We will safeguard and strengthen the bonds between our nations and uphold our trust and treaty obligations. The highest law is to honor tribal sovereignty, promote tribal consultation and ensure tribal self-determination across this country. If tribal nations are doing well

and your kids are doing well, the rest of the country is going to be just fine. As governor of Minnesota, I've been fortunate to work closely with our 11 sovereign tribal communities.”

He said his lieutenant governor, Peggy Flanagan, is an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe and will become the first Native American governor in the country if he and Vice President Harris are elected.

He said Vice President Harris will continue to protect and restore national monuments that are precious to tribes, if elected.

“These national monuments across your state here, those protect tribal homelands,” he said. “(The Vice President) signed more than 200 co-stewardship agreements with tribal nations knowing you don't need us to direct you how you take care of your land. You don't need gatekeepers in front of the way. You need the resources and the authority to do it yourself, and that's what those agreements mean.”

Secretary Haaland said Vice President Harris has worked to uplift Indigenous peoples and ensure they have the resources and opportunities needed to thrive.

“She's led the charge to remove lead pipes in our schools and homes so that our children have clean drinking water,” she said. “Kamala Harris and Tim Walz both have been fierce advocates for Native people, championing initiatives that promote cultural preservation and economic growth, giving Native people a voice in state government, righting historical wrongs and putting real action behind

promises that have been made to tribal communities.”

Sen. Mark Kelly said that Gov. Walz came to

Window Rock because he and Vice President Harris care about Native people.

“They care about this community,” he said. “They care about the unique challenges that you all face. They care about earning your vote so they can partner with you to solve these challenges. Kamala Harris has already shown that as vice president and working together, we are bringing running water and electricity to Navajo. We're bringing high speed internet to

more of the Navajo community.”

He said winning an election is not rocket science – “If it was, I could help, but it ain't” – it's about hard work.

“It's all about who works harder,” Sen Kelly said. “That's it. Pretty simple. So here's my job for all of you: First order of business, you got to make a plan to vote.”

President Nygren said he will be proud to plan to vote for them again.

“Let's vote for those we know will support our self-determination, our prosperity, our veterans, our elders, our children and our tribal sovereignty for Native Nations all across this country – Vice President Kamala Harris and Governor Tim Walz for President and Vice President of the United States,” he said.



U.S. Sen. Mark Kelly with President Nygren