



The Navajo Nation **DR. BUU NYGREN** *PRESIDENT*

Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees | *Think for the Future*

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Navajo President Buu Nygren issues editorial commentary to acknowledge progress under Trump administration, seeks renewal of positive relationship

'I am optimistic the Navajo Nation will continue to address significant economic challenges.'

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren today issued an editorial commentary that acknowledges the progress tribes made under the first administration of President-elect Donald J. Trump and express his commitment to a renewed positive relationship with the incoming President.

He says he looks forward to work with the administration to find new opportunities to improve life for Navajos and the Navajo Nation.

“In partnership with and building on the work of the previous Trump administration, I am optimistic that the Navajo Nation will continue to address significant economic challenges, improve public safety and alleviate the burdens of overregulation on our lands,” President Nygren writes. “We recognize that there is still much work to be done to address the challenges facing the Navajo Nation. As President Trump returns to the White House, I am hopeful that his administration will build upon the groundwork laid during his previous term.”

President Nygren said that with a firm commitment to enhance tribal sovereignty and self-determination, the Navajo Nation is ready to collaborate to strengthen the Nation to create a more prosperous future.

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES TO RENEW FEDERAL-TRIBAL PARTNERSHIPS

BY

NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT BUU NYGREN

Before the founding of the United States and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1788, Indian tribes were recognized by other governments as sovereign entities.

This longstanding government-to-government relationship, marked by treaties, has withstood a tumultuous history filled with suffering and resilience. Today, the 574 federally recognized Native American tribes and Alaska Native villages have each navigated a unique partnership with the United States and every presidential administration.

The start of each administration presents an opportunity to renew federal-tribal partnerships and address longstanding issues of tribal communities. During President Trump’s first term, his administration demonstrated a commitment to engage with Indian Country and confront difficult issues head-on. That resulted in meaningful progress for the Navajo Nation.

In partnership with and building on the work of the previous Trump administration, I am optimistic that the Navajo Nation will continue to address significant economic challenges, improve public safety and alleviate the burdens of overregulation on our lands.

One notable result of the Trump administration was addressing the public safety crises throughout Indian Country. On November 26, 2019, President Trump issued Executive Order 1398 to establish the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives. This initiative included hosting numerous listening sessions, opening six cold case offices, and provided support to combat the alarming rates at which our tribal members have gone missing or endured violence or homicide.

Further, his administration bolstered tribes' ability to protect their communities through the removal of data barriers that hindered our access to national crime databases through the expansion of the Tribal Access Program.

The Trump administration addressed the devastating impacts of opioid addiction in Indian Country through the establishment of the Opioid Reduction Task Force. This was a highly successful collaborative effort between federal, tribal, state and local agencies to prevent the distribution of illegal narcotics in tribal communities.

While making progress to improve public safety in Indian Country, the Trump administration also focused on enhancing tribal economies. Under President Trump's leadership, Public Law 102-477 created an opportunity for the Navajo Nation to streamline federal funding for employment and training program. That ultimately strengthened investments in the Navajo Nation's economic future and reduced costly oversight.

Additionally, the administration worked to reduce bureaucratic red tape to empower tribes to manage their natural resources through simplified Tribal Energy Resource Agreements. Rooted in principles of self-determination and tribal sovereignty, these initiatives opened economic opportunities for the Navajo Nation.

Despite these achievements, though, the Navajo Nation continues to struggle with significant economic challenges. Our unemployment rates have consistently hovered around 50% since our transition to a cash economy from a trading economy well over a century ago. Moreover, while we've seen tremendous growth of border towns around us, antiquated laws and geographic isolation have left us living within hundreds of miles of economic silence.

As the largest tribe in the United States, the Navajo Nation is committed to invest in initiatives that preserve our cultural heritage. Our reservation spans 27,000 square miles. It reaches across the northeast corner of Arizona, parts of Utah, eastward into New Mexico and into Colorado.

With 421,718 enrolled members, our people live in every state and are employed in every profession. We take pride in speaking and preserving our language, *Diné Bizaad*. We participate in our traditional ceremonies, continue to live our traditional way of life, obtain master's degrees, JDs and doctorates, and enlist in every branch of the military by the thousands.

While we celebrate our strengths, we recognize that there is still much work to be done to address the challenges facing the Navajo Nation. As President Trump returns to the White House, I am hopeful that his administration will build upon the groundwork laid during his previous term.

With a firm commitment to enhance tribal sovereignty and self-determination, the Navajo Nation is ready to collaborate to strengthen our community to create a more prosperous future.