



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
January 26, 2015

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**LoRenzo Bates named Speaker of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council**



**Photo: Speaker LoRenzo Bates takes the oath of office at the opening day of the Winter Session.**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On the opening day of the 2015 Winter Council Session, Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) was named Speaker of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council.

Following a runoff election in which Speaker Bates and Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jedito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) each received 12 supporting votes from the 24-member Council, Delegate Shepherd withdrew his candidacy for the speakership, citing the need for Council to unite and work together.

Delegate Shepherd received a standing ovation from his fellow Council colleagues and the public seated in the audience following his announcement.

Speaker Bates thanked Delegate Shepherd for his tremendous display of leadership and said he believes it is a sign that the new Council will work together for the Navajo People.

“I believe this Council will move forward united and work for the betterment of our people,” stated Speaker Bates.

Council Delegates Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood), Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tside To ii), and Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) were also nominated.

In accordance with the process adopted by the Council, each of the five candidates was given 15 minutes to present their platform to the Council. The two candidates who garnered the most votes then proceeded to face one another in the runoff election.

According to 2 N.N.C. §282, the Speaker of the Council shall serve a term of two-years “at the pleasure of the Navajo Nation Council.”

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