



24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

HONORABLE SETH DAMON

Speaker, 24th Navajo Nation Council

February 4, 2019

Members of the Utah State Legislature
Utah State Capitol
350 N. State Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

Re: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and LGBT+ Awareness Day

Dear Honorable Members of the Utah State Legislature:

On behalf of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, we urge you to vote in favor of HCR 6, "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and LGBT+ Awareness Day," sponsored by Representative Angela Romero.

There are eight federal and state recognized Native American tribes in Utah. According to the most recent U.S. census there are approximately 70,300 Native Americans living in the state, some 71% or 49,200 of which live in urban areas like Salt Lake Valley; Utah Valley; and, Davis, Washington, and Cache counties. A recent study on violence against Indigenous women and Indigenous LGBTQI by the Urban Indian Health Center based in Seattle, Washington reports that Indigenous women and LGBTQI are 10 times more likely to be victims of homicide across the country. Additionally, the report notes that of the 71 cities the report surveyed Salt Lake City and the state of Utah have alarming high rates of missing and murdered Indigenous women and LGBTQI relative to the other cities surveyed. They were ranked 8th and 9th respectively in the report.

Violence against Native American women, girls, and LGBTQI occur at disproportionate rates both on and off reservations. Tribal Nations face jurisdictional complexities that complicate efforts in seeking justice for our female and LGBTQI relatives. We are working with organizations like Restoring Ancestral Winds, a tribal coalition whose purpose is to provide support to tribes in eliminating domestic violence and sexual assault, and other sexual assault and domestic violence organizations in the state to address and eliminate this type of violence in our communities. Additionally, we are pursuing partnerships with federal, county, and municipalities to address this crisis.

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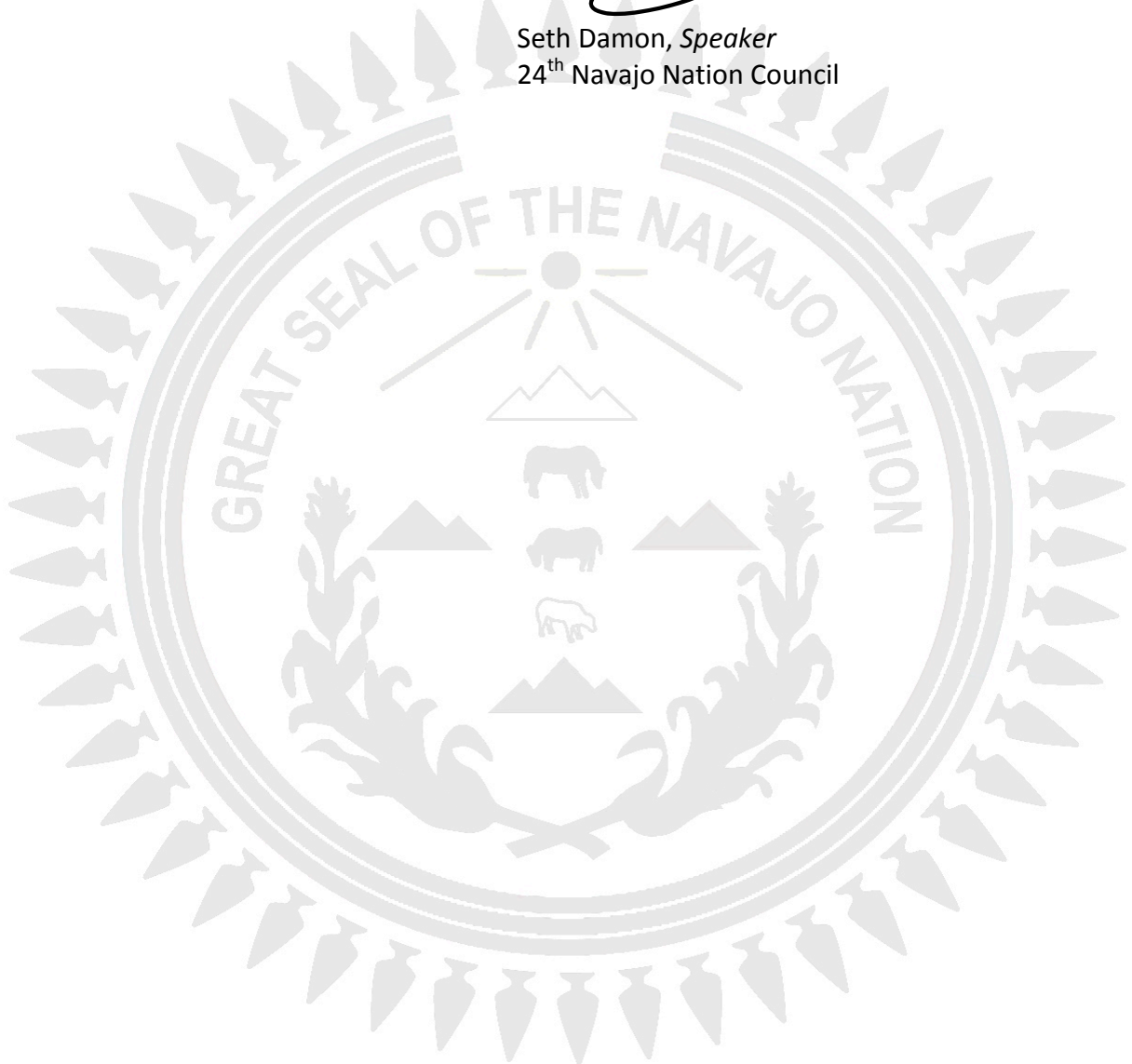
Your support for this resolution will help raise awareness of this epidemic and help families, communities, and tribal nations heal from the loss of loved ones. Furthermore, your support for this resolution will send a strong message that we are committed to finding collaborative and sustainable solutions to this crisis.

We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Seth Damon, *Speaker*
24th Navajo Nation Council



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