



Joint Press Release

Navajo Nation Office of the President and the Vice President
Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker
Navajo Nation Office of the Chief Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Navajo Nation FY 2020 Comprehensive Budget signed into law



WINDOW ROCK – On Friday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, 24th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, and Associate Justice Eleanor Shirley gathered at the Veterans Memorial Park in the capital of the Navajo Nation, for a signing ceremony to officially adopt the Navajo Nation’s Fiscal Year 2020 Comprehensive Budget.

“Early in the budget process, Vice President and I stood on the principle that we, as a government, have a fiduciary responsibility to account for public funds, to manage finances wisely, and to plan for the adequate funding of services desired by the Navajo People. In keeping with this principle, the FY 2020 Comprehensive Budget will provide for services to our Navajo people, including our elders, children, and veterans. We did not use the presidential line-item authority with this budget, and that is a symbol of the three branches of government working together to develop this budget,” said President Nez, while also calling for the Nation to approve a five-year Capital Improvement Plan prior to considering the budget for the next fiscal year after 2020.

The 24th Navajo Nation Council approved budget resolution CS-30-19 on Sept. 3, by a vote of 16-4. The budget legislation was sponsored by Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr., who also serves as the Vice Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee.

“First, I wish to thank President Nez and Chief Justice Jayne for joining the Navajo Nation Council in creating this budget. Our stewardship over the Navajo people’s resources has always been carried out with our nation’s future in our minds. The Navajo Nation Council looks now to 2021 and beyond so that we can strengthen the nation’s position based on local needs. Council Delegates will continue to bring the priorities of our Navajo communities to the nation and we will continue to work together to develop the most effective solutions. This budget reflects a collaborative effort. On behalf of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, I wish to thank everyone that helped create the fiscal year 2020 budget,” said 24th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon.

“Ahéhee’ to the 24th Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Seth Damon, President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer for diligently working to approve a comprehensive budget for Fiscal Year 2020. Specifically, I’d like to thank our leadership and the Navajo People for the funding appropriated to the Judicial Branch. The goal of the Judicial Branch is to provide justice and the approved budget will be used for the necessary tools and services that the Navajo people need in regards to Judicial Branch responsibility and duties,” said Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne.

Some notable appropriations included in the budget include the following:

- An additional \$1 million for the Navajo Department of Aging and Long Term Care Services for each of the five agencies
- Up to \$2 million for chapter officials compensation, which was previously unfunded in previous budgets
- Two-percent General Wage Adjustment for employees and chapter administrative employees
- Nearly \$664,000 for the Navajo Energy Office
- Nearly \$632,000 for a gravel pit site development
- Additional \$100,000 for a prosecutor for Dził Yijiin District
- Additional \$617,000 for unmet needs for Criminal Investigations

“The Navajo Nation will face revenue shortfalls in the coming years but working together with the Navajo Nation Council we will find ways to address the need of providing services to the Navajo People. We continue to stand by our positions of staying within our budgets, being fiscally responsible, and

reviewing our financial system while maintaining our service level to the Navajo People and those that work with the Navajo Nation government. We trust the Legislative and Judicial Branches will join us in working within our budgets and being fiscally responsible for the funds entrusted to us,” Vice President Lizer stated.

“Everyone got to work. Starting with the audit on fiscal year 2018 then proceeding with revenue projections. Division directors and program managers created their budgets with guidance from the three branch chiefs and the council’s oversight committees. This is the first year federal funding has been included so that we have a more complete picture. It took council less than half a day to approve the budget once it passed the Budget and Finance and Naabik’íyáti’ Committees. I commend all those involved, particularly the Office of the Controller and the Office of Management and Budget, for working together,” said Budget and Finance Committee Chairman Jamie Henio.

The Navajo Nation’s Comprehensive Budget will take effect on the first day of the new 2020 fiscal year on Oct. 1, 2019.

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