



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Council Delegates Freeland and Halona advocate for chapter projects at N.M. Roundhouse



PHOTO: Hon. Mark Freeland and Hon. Pernell Halona traveled to the New Mexico Roundhouse on Jan. 30, 2020 to advocate for tribal infrastructure and capital outlay funding for Navajo Nation Chapters in the state.

SANTA FE, N.M. — Council Delegate Mark Freeland and Council Delegate Pernell Halona traveled to the Roundhouse Jan. 30 for McKinley County Gallup Day and to advocate on behalf of their chapters for tribal infrastructure and capital outlay funding. “We’re meeting with representatives on basic infrastructure projects such as heavy equipment,” said Council Delegate Freeland, who was joined by representatives from Becenti, Crownpoint, and Nahodishgish.

Council Delegate Halona was joined by representatives from Mexican Springs Chapter and Tohatchi Chapter. He was advocating for \$300,000 from N.M. Capital Outlay for the Mexican Springs multipurpose building, a \$7 million project to replace the existing chapter house built in the 1980s, which has asbestos. The proposed 8,813 square foot building has matching funds from the chapter in the amount of \$115,936. N.M. has contributed \$275,000. “We are seeking replacement of an unsafe community building contaminated by asbestos,” Council Delegate Halona said.

On Dec. 9, 2019, Mexican Springs Chapter passed Resolution No. MS-12-2019-04 by a vote of 15-0 to request \$300,000 from N.M. Capital Outlay for the planning and engineering costs associated with the building design. This was after the Office of Environmental Health closed the kitchen due to asbestos contamination. The chapter house was built with surplus building materials left over from the chapter's Job Corps warehouse. Sen. Shannon Pinto (D-Dist. 3) hosted the Navajo delegation on the Senate floor and at the rostrum.

Other leaders from the City of Gallup were present for McKinley County Gallup Day. Senate Memorial 26, introduced by Sen. George Munoz (D-Dist. 4), proclaimed Jan. 30, 2020 as McKinley County Gallup Day in the Senate. "We're actually the true west-siders of New Mexico," Sen. Munoz said. "Our culture is so rich." He recounted that during World War II, when Japanese were forced into internment camps, Gallup railed against the federal government and did not participate.

Sen. Munoz said each year, the city chooses a person to honor at McKinley County Gallup Day and for 2020, that person was Anslem Jake, superintendent for the Gallup Parks Dept. Jake worked for the city for 32 years and has been a resident of Gallup for more than 40 years. "If you went to Red Rock Park for Ceremonial or rodeo, this is the gentleman that made sure everything was clean and taken care of," Sen. Munoz said before giving Jake an award from the city. Sen. Pinto also confirmed Genevieve Jackson as a member of the N.M. Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees. Jackson's appointment will expire Sept. 24, 2023. -

Navajo Nation leaders will be attending American Indian Day at the Roundhouse Feb. 7.

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