



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 16, 2018

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### **Navajo Nation Council recognizes the accomplishments of outgoing BIA Navajo Regional Director Sharon Pinto**



**PHOTO: (left to right) Council Delegates Tom Chee, Leonard Pete, Raymond Smith, Jr., Seth Damon, BIA Navajo Regional Director Sharon Pinto, Speaker LoRenzo Bates, Council Delegates Leonard Tsosie, Dwight Witherspoon, Tuchoney Slim, Jr., and Walter Phelps at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber in Window Rock, Ariz. on Aug. 16, 2018.**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council on Thursday gathered at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber in Window Rock to honor and recognize Sharon Pinto, who will be leaving her position as the Bureau of Indian Affairs Navajo Regional director on Friday.

Pinto was appointed to the position in October 2011, after serving as the deputy director for several years. The U.S. Department of the Interior recently reassigned Pinto to serve as the deputy director for the Bureau of Indian Education.

During the ceremony, several Council members expressed their appreciation to Pinto for her distinguished service and for helping many Navajo people and communities.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) presented Pinto with an appreciation plaque, on behalf of the Navajo Nation Council. During the opening remarks, Speaker Bates also commended Pinto's service and thanked her for her assistance with many issues including the development of the Former Bennett Freeze Area, Federal Land Buy Back Program, Navajo Generating Station, land issues, and many others.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) said Pinto often went above and beyond to help work through federal policies and requirements for the benefit of thousands of Navajo families and communities.

"Here is an individual who understands Navajo and our people, and someone who practices true self-determination and trust responsibility," said Delegate Tsosie. "It is wrong for the United States government to do what they're doing by reassigning her."

On behalf of the Navajo Nation Council, Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) presented a shawl to Pinto and expressed his gratitude and well wishes.

"You have been a blessing to the Navajo people, and I wish you and your family the best. I will continue fighting to bring you back to the Navajo BIA office," added Delegate Damon.

Pinto was joined by her family at the ceremony, and offered her appreciation to the Council, her staff members, and her children for their support. During her remarks, she attributed much of her success to the teachings of her grandparents who helped raise her as a child and praised her staff members for their dedication and hard work over the years.

Pinto will assume her new position as the deputy director for the Bureau of Indian Education in the coming weeks.



**PHOTO: BIA Navajo Regional Director Sharon Pinto addresses members of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council in Window Rock, Ariz. on Aug. 16, 2018.**

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