



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

MEDIA CONTACTS

Alray Nelson, Communications Director
Kyrin Hardy, Public Information Officer
E-mail: nnlb.communications@gmail.com
Phone: (928) 530-8329

Navajo Nation Council certifies Emergency Resolution providing \$2,000 in Hardship Assistance Checks, President Jonathan Nez will Approve or Veto

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 4, 2022



PHOTO: Council Delegates Nathaniel Brown and Amber Kanazbah Crotty join Pro Tem Speaker Eugenia Charles-Newton to certify Resolution No. CD-62-21 at the Navajo Nation Council Chambers.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Yesterday, the 24th Navajo Nation Council officially certified Resolution No. CD-62-21 to allocate \$557 million in Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Funds (NNFRF) to send a second hardship assistance check to over 345,000 qualified Navajo people. The bill passed by a vote of 18 in favor, 2 opposed, during a special session hosted virtually last week in Window Rock, Ariz.

Pro Tem Speaker Eugenia Charles-Newton was joined by Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty and Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown in the Council Chambers to certify the legislation.

Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez has 10 days or until Thursday, January 13, 2022, to approve or veto the bill by 5 p.m. If the President takes no action, the resolution automatically becomes law.

“If the resolution is signed by President Jonathan Nez, the Office of the Controller will immediately begin processing financial hardship checks for over 340,000 Navajo people. These funds will help families pay for their mortgage or rental payments, purchase groceries and fuel, and get firewood or any other essential items they need right now. This money belongs to our people, and the Council has heard their requests and we have seen the need. It is now up to President

Nez to stand on the right side of history and immediately sign this historic legislation into law for thousands of Navajo people,” said Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton (Shiprock).

Resolution No. CD-62-21 provides \$2,000 in hardship assistance for up to 250,000 qualifying individuals for direct pandemic relief.

Earlier this year, the Navajo Nation received approximately \$2.1 billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the Biden-Harris Administration to respond to the negative impacts of COVID-19.

“This resolution sends a clear message that our focus is on the people before projects. Our communities should no longer suffer when the Navajo government can provide them immediate hardship relief and some hope during this pandemic. Many of our relatives are suffering from grief, homelessness, post-traumatic stress and financial trouble. We have heard from grandparents who are now raising their grandchildren because they lost parents to COVID. Older siblings are taking on parental roles to raise their younger brothers and sisters. These stories are real for us, and they resonate deeply in our hearts. Your hardship and the need for support was heard loud and clear by the Navajo Nation Council. We thank Honorable Herman Daniels Jr. for his prayers that guided us, it was full of passion, and those prayers opened our hearts to be here today,” said Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Cove, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Red Valley, Tsé’áhnáoozt’í’í, Sheep Springs, Beclabito, Gad’ii’áhi/Tó Ko’i).

Additionally, the resolution will give \$600 in hardship funding to minors below 18 years old for up to 95,000 qualifying individuals. This financial assistance can be used to purchase personal protective equipment, pay utility bills, for rental assistance, and for educational-related expenses for students.

“Last year, the Navajo government invested over \$361 million in CARES Act funding into every Navajo home as direct hardship assistance and every adult received around \$1,350 for COVID-19 relief. We are here now certifying this emergency legislation for a second allocation of hardship payments for \$2,000 per adult and \$600 per child that will allow our relatives to purchase essential things like gasoline, firewood, and food supplies during this pandemic. This is the people’s money, and it should bring them each some sort of hope during troubling financial times. The Navajo Nation Council has the best interests of our Navajo people in mind and this resolution is now in the hands of President Jonathan Nez for consideration,” said Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Dennehotso, Kayenta, Chííłchinbii’tó).

Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaali, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh) shared that if the emergency resolution is signed into law, the Navajo Nation Council will work with the Executive Branch to invest over \$577 million in direct hardship assistance checks to hundreds of Navajo families. “Your Council Delegates have heard directly from our chapter officials, the elders, many parents, and our young people. This direct financial assistance will help thousands pay for home repairs, the water and utility bills, for college textbook and tuition costs, and so much more,” he added.

Individuals do not have to reapply for the second allocation of hardship assistance payments. Any future check disbursements will follow the financial process previously approved by the Office of the Controller at: <https://www.nnooc.org/>

- If signed into law by President Jonathan Nez, Resolution No. CD-62-21 provides \$2,000 in hardship assistance for up to 250,000 qualifying individuals for direct COVID-19 pandemic relief.
- If signed into law by President Jonathan Nez, Resolution No. CD-62-21 provides \$600 in hardship assistance to minors below 18 years old for up to 95,000 qualifying individuals.
- Further questions regarding change of addresses, updating Certificates of Indian Blood (CIB), and applying for this new hardship assistance allocation will be made available by the Office of the Controller (OOC) should President Jonathan Nez approve the resolution.

###