



## Navajo Nation honors the life of former Council Delegate Harry J. Willetto

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**OJO ENCINO, N.M** — Speaker Seth Damon and the 24th Navajo Nation Council offer their condolences to the family of respected Ojo Encino community leader and former Council Delegate Harry J. Willetto.

Willetto was born on January 3, 1942, in the community of Pueblo Alto near Farmington and Bloomfield, N.M. He is Naakai Dine'é (Mexican Clan) and born for Tódich'ii'nii (Bitter Water Clan). His beloved wife is Virginia Willetto and they were married for over 57 years.

“Mr. Harry Willetto is a loving father, grandfather, and beloved husband who was revered in his community for his loyalty and kind spirit. He leaves behind a legacy of public service to the Navajo people serving the Eastern Agency as Counselor Chapter President for years. Mr. Willetto was a humble man who deeply loved his family and the communities he served. The Navajo people send prayers of protection to give strength to his family during this time,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

Since the age of 21 years old, Willetto served as a public official advocating for the Navajo Tribal Police Department and for emergency medical services to be delivered to rural areas across the Navajo Nation.

In 1991, he was elected to the 17th Navajo Nation Council and since has served for 20 years on various committees including the Ethics and Rules and Public Safety Committee.

“When serving as the Ojo Encino chapter manager, I worked with Mr. Harry J. Willetto when he was our chapter president and then as a fellow colleague on the Navajo Nation Council. Then in 2017, a land agent with the oil explorers made a statement about making millionaires. Our Counselor Chapter President Harry Willetto fiercely responded by saying - ‘What about the health of our community members? Isn’t our health worth millions of dollars?’ All this was stated when he was enduring health complications. That is a statesman’s perspective, and Honorable Willetto is a man to honor,” said Chairman Daniel Tso (Littlewater, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake, Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Ojo Encino, Counselor).



PHOTO: Harry J. Willetto and his wife Virginia Willetto.

Funeral arrangements for Honorable Harry J. Willeto are being finalized by the family and will be posted on social media and in local newspapers.

Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) Chairman Daniel Tso will officially present a Navajo Nation Flag to the family to honor his years of service to the Navajo people and the citizens of New Mexico.

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