



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Navajo Nation applauds the passage of historic Inflation Reduction Act by the United States Senate

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Speaker Seth Damon and the 24th Navajo Nation Council applaud the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) by the United State Senate that a spending bill to tackle climate change, the high cost of prescription drugs, and lower the deficit by roughly \$300 billion. The IRA now goes to Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House of Representatives for final consideration this Friday before being signed into law by President Joe Biden.

Over \$272.5 million has been invested in Indian Country, the largest in history to combat climate change, drought conditions, water mitigation projects, sustaining tribal fish hatcheries, and loans for clean tribal energy development. The bill also makes significant changes to health policy by giving Medicare the power for the first time to negotiate the prices of certain prescription drugs and extending expiring health care subsidies for three years.

“The Inflation Reduction Act is another major investment by Congress and the Biden Administration to uplift the 570+ Tribal Nations across the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. This historic legislation aims to reduce the national deficit, combat growing climate change concerns affecting our Native communities, ensure tribes invest in green energy projects, and for the Navajo Nation to be a leader in clean energy development. We applaud the leadership of Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Senator Kyrsten Simena, Senator Joe Manchin, and President Biden for pushing this through,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the IRA will reduce the deficit and be paid for through new taxes, including a 15% minimum tax on large corporations and a 1% tax on stock buybacks, and boost the Internal Revenue Service’s ability to collect.

“The Navajo Nation, along with all Indian Nations, have been deeply affected by the rise of inflation due to the increase in demand for gasoline, food, prescription drugs, and energy. Inflation is at an all-time high of over 9%, and along with rising interest rates, our economy has taken a terrible hit. With the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, the Navajo Nation can invest more into sustainable energy projects for future generations. Climate change is real as these unprecedented drought conditions impact our crops, vegetation, wildlife, and roadways,” said Budget & Finance Chairman Jamie Henio (Alamo, Ramah, Tóhajiilee).

The IRA passed through the budget reconciliation process, which means all 50 Democrats and one tie-breaker vote from Vice President Kamala Harris were needed. No Republican Senator voted for the bill.

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Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i), added, "Native communities have the technical expertise, capacity, and place-based knowledge needed to develop effective climate change and energy solutions. With critical investments in the Inflation Reduction Act, we're making sure the federal government steps up to support Native-driven climate resilience, advance Tribal energy development, and fulfill its trust responsibility to Native communities."

The Inflation Reduction Act appropriates \$272.5 million to Native communities for climate resilience and adaptation:

- \$20 billion in loan guarantees for Tribal energy development.
- \$150 million for Tribal home electrification.
- \$75 million for loans to Tribes for energy development.
- \$25 million for climate resilience funding to the Native Hawaiian community.
- \$12.5 million to mitigate drought impacts for Tribal communities.
- \$10 million for Tribal fish hatcheries.

In a White House statement, President Biden added, "The Inflation Reduction Act makes the largest investment ever in combating the existential crisis of climate change. It addresses the climate crisis and strengthens our energy security, creating jobs manufacturing solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles in America with American workers. It lowers families' energy costs by hundreds of dollars each year. Finally, it pays for all this by establishing a minimum corporate tax so that our richest corporations start to pay their fair share. It does not raise taxes on those making under \$400,000 annually – not one cent. The House should pass this as soon as possible, and I look forward to signing it into law."

Last Friday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that employers added 528,000 jobs with an unemployment rate of 3.5%. This marks the lowest the unemployment rate has been in more than 50 years.

"By investing in American energy production and innovative technologies, the U.S. is on a path toward energy security and lower gas and home energy prices, and we are leading the fight on global climate. By ensuring fairness in our federal tax code so that the largest and most profitable corporations pay their fair share, we can begin to get our financial house in order while protecting working Americans and small businesses. I look forward to seeing the House of Representatives pass this important legislation and President Biden quickly signing it into law," said U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-West Virginia).

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