



# 25<sup>TH</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council secures key positions under the Tribal Interior Budget Council**



**PHOTO:** Members of the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council along with Navajo Area BIA Director Greg Mehojah at the Tribal Interior Budget Council meeting in Washington, D.C. on April 12, 2023.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – On Friday, members of the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council successfully secured several key voting member and co-chair positions under the Tribal Interior Budget Council, during a meeting with the 12 Bureau of Indian Affairs regions in Washington D.C. The Tribal-Interior Budget Council provides a forum and process for tribal nations and federal officials to work together in developing annual budget requests for programs under the U.S. Department of the Interior. This week’s meeting focus on budget priorities for upcoming fiscal years.

For the Navajo Area Region, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and Speaker Crystalayne Curley will serve as the Navajo Nation's primary representatives on the Tribal Interior Budget Council. In 2019, Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton was selected to serve as the co-chair of TIBC's Public Safety and Justice Sub-Committee, a role that she will continue to serve.

During this week's meetings, Speaker Curley also nominated several Council Delegates to serve on TIBC's sub-committees. By a vote of TIBC's primary representatives on Friday, Council Delegate Nathan Notah was selected to serve on the Land, Water, and Natural Resources Sub-Committee, Council Delegate Cherilyn Yazzie will serve on the Public Safety and Justice Sub-Committee, and Council Delegate Otto Tso was selected to serve as the co-chair of the Transportation Sub-Committee. Shawna Becenti, who serves as the Head of School for Navajo Preparatory School, was nominated by President Nygren and selected to serve on the Education Sub-Committee.

"I thank my Council colleagues, President Nygren, Navajo Nation Washington Office, and Navajo Area BIA Director Greg Mehojah for presenting a strong and united voice among many tribal leaders and before the Tribal Interior Budget Council. It is important that we continue to carefully coordinate to secure more resources that support our communities. I congratulate the Council Delegates and Ms. Shawna Becenti for their selections. These appointments are key to securing more resources for critical services related to roads, educational opportunities, natural resources, and public safety. Through these key positions, the Navajo Nation will have greater influence in the federal budget process," said Speaker Curley.

The Navajo Nation also continues to advocate for advanced funding for critical programs and services to prevent disruption in services for the Navajo people. Council members also requested additional funds for school safety, public safety operations and maintenance, and dam safety.

"I'm excited to be selected as the co-chair for the Transportation Sub-Committee for the Tribal Interior Budget Council. Advocacy for roads funding from U.S. Department of Transportation and the federal government is critical for the Navajo Nation and Indian Country. We have to stand with Indian Country as one, to make sure we advocate for improvements for Navajo people and the livelihood of all Native Americans. We have to hold the federal government to their treaty and trust obligations to tribes," said Delegate Tso.

Delegate Notah stated, "As a new member of the Tribal Interior Budget Council's Land, Water, and Natural Resources Sub-Committee, I look forward to working on the budget process for the Navajo Nation and other tribes and federal officials. I'm looking forward to helping develop a solid annual budget for Indian programs in the Department of the Interior. I will be meeting with our own BIA Branches in developing budgets for our Nation."

The Navajo Nation Council thanks the Navajo Nation Washington Office, Navajo Area Regional BIA, and all of the tribal leaders for their support and input at the Tribal Interior Budget Council meetings. For more information about the Tribal Interior Budget Council, please visit: <https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/obpm/tibc>.

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