



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Signing of Historic Interagency Agreement fully obligates all Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Funds



PHOTO: (L to R) NNFRF Office Executive Director Lisa Jymm, Controller Sean McCabe, President Buu Nygren, Interim Attorney General Heather Clah, and Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Today, Speaker Crystalyne Curley joined Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren for the signing of an Interagency Agreement under Resolution CD-54-24, which fully obligates the entirety of over \$2 billion of Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Funds (NNFRF) before the U.S. Treasury’s obligation deadline of December 31, 2024.

During the signing ceremony, Speaker Curley discussed the purpose of the agreement, which is designed to address the procedural challenges faced by agencies in obligating and expending NNFRF funds. Speaker Curley thanked the Budget and Finance Committee, the Office of the Controller, Navajo Nation Department of Justice, the Office of the President and Vice President, and the NNFRF Office for assisting with the agreement.

“We listened to our colleagues, the Diné People, and our chapters, who expressed the need to streamline the process for obligating NNFRF funds,” Speaker Curley said. “At the local level, there were many concerns about delays caused by red tape and bureaucracy. This legislation will help expedite the process. Under this Master Agreement, if there are project cost savings or unexpended NNFRF funds, we now have the flexibility to reallocate those funds to another eligible project that complies with U.S. Treasury guidelines.”

Legislation 0264-24, which was unanimously approved by the 25th Navajo Nation Council on December 16 and signed into law as Resolution CD-54-24 by President Nygren on December

24, establishes a comprehensive Interagency Agreement. The agreement is intended to streamline decision-making and simplify processes for all recipient agencies handling NNFRF funds. It ensures that the funds are used as intended and reduces the risk of unspent funds being returned to the federal government.

The legislation also amends Resolution CJN-29-22 to expedite modifications that reassign oversight of the NNFRF Office to the Office of the Controller. This change aims to improve program efficiency, enhance fund monitoring and reporting, and ensure streamlined operations and greater accountability.

As part of the agreement, the Controller will be able to secure contractors to assess and implement how program funds will be used.

President Nygren praised the 25th Navajo Nation Council for addressing procedural challenges that had slowed the obligation of NNFRF funds and for opening the way for progress on NNFRF projects.

“Government efficiency is crucial, and it is one of our responsibilities,” President Nygren said. “The process for ARPA dollars has been cumbersome. Our implementation of bathroom renovations took a year. We don’t have another year to reappropriate this money. This agreement accelerates the Navajo Nation government’s ability to meet the December 2026 deadline.”

Controller Sean McCabe explained that after December 31, 2024, U.S. Treasury guidelines will prevent changes to the scope of work (SOW) or contract terms.

“However, if the scope of work in the Interagency Agreement is already in place, funds can be reallocated within that framework, even after the December 31 deadline,” Controller McCabe said. “This provides the flexibility needed to spend funds on projects that will benefit the Navajo Nation while meeting federal requirements and deadlines.”

All agencies involved in today’s signing worked together to evaluate the process and identify solutions for obligating all NNFRF funds.

“Our goal is to ensure that not one cent of this money goes back to the federal government,” said Speaker Curley.

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