



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Speaker Curley discusses federal budget impacts during New Mexico Tribal Leaders Summit



During the summit, Speaker Curley called for the state and federal government to protect critical funding for tribal nations.

SANTA FE, N.M. – Today, during the 2025 New Mexico Tribal Leaders Summit, Speaker Crystalyne Curley emphasized the urgent need for the state and tribal nations to identify and document the impacts of federal funding cuts on tribal communities.

The summit, held at the Santa Fe Indian School in Santa Fe, N.M., addressed federal actions impacting the State of New Mexico and tribal nations, economic development in Indian Country, and New Mexico Capital Outlay and the Tribal Infrastructure Fund.

Speaker Curley called for detailed data on affected programs—including Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities, SNAP, and higher education services—to guide tribal coordination and responses.

“We are looking at a modern-day monster,” said Speaker Curley, urging a unified strategy among tribal leaders and partnership with the state to uphold trust responsibilities and protect critical funding for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) programs.

During the summit, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham met with New Mexico tribal leaders to address growing concerns surrounding recent federal budget cuts and the resulting impacts on funding administered through the state to tribal nations. The meeting reinforced the

state's commitment to tribal sovereignty and collective advocacy.

"We share a fierce dedication to our communities. We are one state, one collective group working to improve quality of life," said Governor Lujan Grisham.

The Governor emphasized shared priorities such as economic development, environmental sustainability, access to quality health care, education, and public safety. She underscored that tribal voices must always be included in decision-making processes that affect their nations, pointing to New Mexico's model of tribal-state collaboration as a contrast to federal engagements where tribal participation is often absent.

"The federal government is moving away from sovereignty while New Mexico leans into sovereignty," she said. "Nothing more important than our mutual respect to do better for New Mexico and New Mexicans."

Governor Lujan Grisham also warned of the long-term consequences of shifting federal policies, including the potential loss of billions in Medicaid funding over the next decade and major cuts to education, special education funds, and supplemental nutrition assistance programs (SNAP).

Speaker Curley reiterated the need for continuous monitoring of federal actions and their local effects. "To keep up with the executive orders being issued, the Navajo Nation Council holds weekly leadership meetings," she said. "There is a need for all tribes to start outlining what projects in their regions are being impacted and the dollar amounts."

As tribal nations face continued uncertainty, Curley urged unity and collective strength.

"This is a battle, a fight every day," she said. "But if we don't give in to the inclination of divide and conquer, we will be stronger."

Governor Lujan Grisham reaffirmed her administration's commitment to defending tribal interests and strengthening government-to-government relationships in the face of national uncertainty.

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