

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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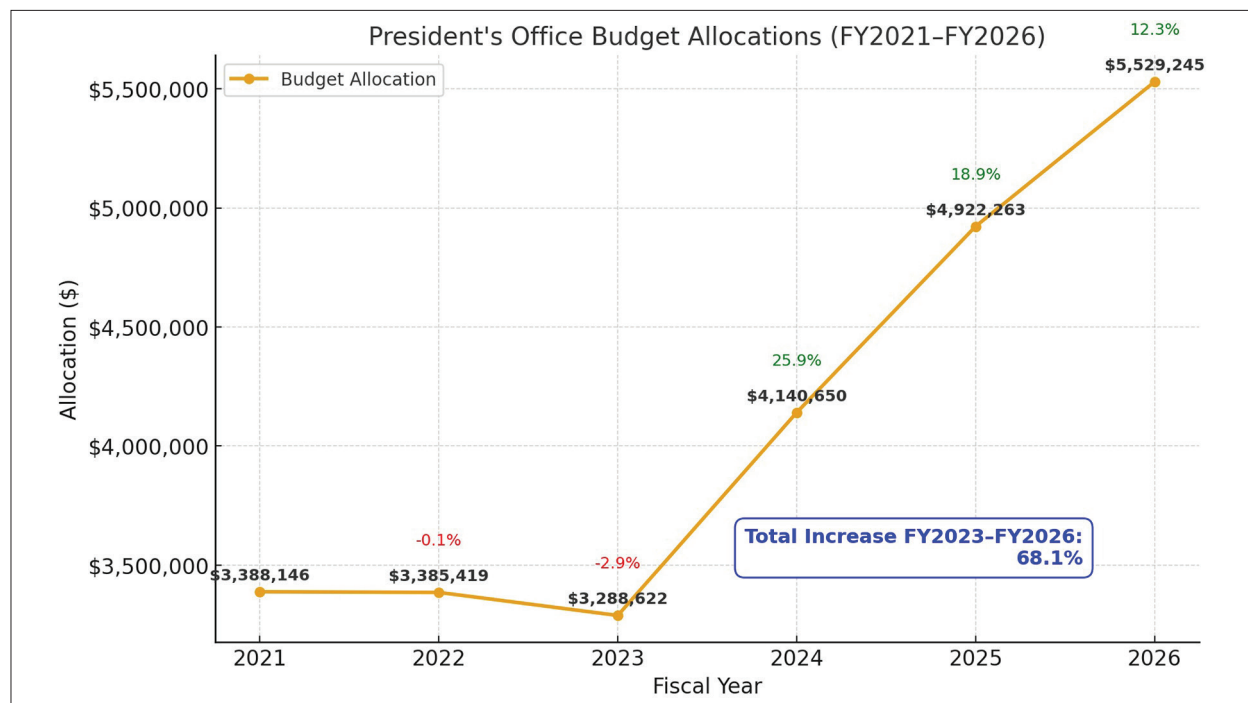
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President Nygren eliminates jobs, support for government services, and Navajo Nation Youth Council funding with line-item vetoes



Since taking office, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren's budget has increased by 68-percent.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council expressed disappointment over Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren's line-item vetoes of critical operational funding for the Legislative Branch in the Navajo Nation's Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget, which was unanimously approved by the Council on Sept 4.

Despite the efforts of the Council to fund operations and personnel for Executive Branch divisions and programs, based on data including spending trends from fiscal years 2023-2025, President Nygren eliminated over \$8.8 million in funding for the Legislative Branch while approving all funding for the Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP).

President Nygren also eliminated 28 full-time jobs within the Legislative Branch, while approving full funding for at least 40 staff positions within OPVP totaling over \$5 million. During the budget process, the Council prioritized all jobs to avoid layoffs and to increase salaries for regular status employees. Formal layoff notices will be sent to the 28 legislative employees this week.

Additionally, President Nygren cut all funding for the Navajo Nation Youth Council, totaling over \$289,000, which included funding for personnel.

On Aug. 18, President Nygren issued a letter requesting that OPVP be funded at \$6,906,860, nearly

triple the budget amounts of previous Navajo Nation presidents. Despite numerous invitations and requests from Standing Committees and the Council, President Nygren never met with delegates to discuss his budget proposal or priorities, nor did OPVP staff provide budget amendments.

President Nygren submitted an inflated budget request for OPVP, while simultaneously taking away funds from Executive Branch divisions and programs that deliver essential direct services to Navajo families. Based on budget data, OPVP received \$3.2 million when the Nygren Administration took office in FY2023, \$4.1 million in FY2024, \$4.9 million in FY2025, and recently requested \$6.9 million for FY2026. Since taking office, President Nygren's budget has increased by 68-percent.

The Office of the Controller also reported that numerous Executive Branch divisions were paying for Nygren promotional items – funds that should have been used to help Navajo families. Based on these questionable spending patterns, the Council reallocated funding from the President's budget to restore funding for direct services including a \$2.2 million reduction for the 110 chapters that the President proposed.

The Council also restored funding for critical areas including public safety, health, education, and community development. Despite these efforts, the President chose to retaliate by slashing the Legislative Branch's operational budget, which will impact the development of laws and amendments that ultimately benefit the Navajo people and communities.

During the budget process, several Council members described OPVP's funding request as excessive and designed to support President Nygren's re-election efforts, rather than prioritizing direct services to the Navajo people.

"The Council acted responsibly to restore balance in the Executive Branch's budget and to ensure that frontline programs were not shortchanged by the President's proposed budget. When President Nygren campaigned for the presidency, he promised 'change' and he promised to work together with the Council. He has failed to live up to those promises every fiscal year. His line-item vetoes have proven to be the old politics of the past and undermine the ability of the Legislative Branch to effectively fulfill its responsibilities on behalf of the Navajo people," said Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

She added that the Navajo Nation is already preparing for the possibility of a federal government shutdown if Congress does not reach an agreement to fund the federal government beyond the end of September and that President Nygren's actions further jeopardize the Navajo government's ability to operate.

The FY2026 Comprehensive Budget process began in March, yet President Nygren has never appeared before the Standing Committees or the full Council to present his budget priorities or justify his requests, leaving delegates and the Navajo people without the opportunity to understand his administration's needs or plans.

"Every branch of government has a responsibility to work together in a transparent and accountable manner. The Budget and Finance Committee met that responsibility by holding public hearings in various communities. The President and his staff chose not to participate in that process. There is a clear void in leadership within the Office of the President and Vice President," said Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) Chair Shaandiin Parrish, who sponsored the comprehensive budget legislation.

Chair Parrish also noted that during the BFC public hearings, numerous Navajo constituents called on the Council to reduce OPVP's overall budget, citing excessive spending and mismanagement of public funds.

"Eliminating operational funding for the Legislative Branch interferes with the Council's ability to hold President Nygren and his Administration accountable for allegations related to ZenniHome, Native Community Capital, and other allegations and red flags that have been raised. Despite these setbacks, the Council remains focused on securing our Nation's financial resources and holding the President accountable," stated Speaker Curley.

The Council remains open to meeting with President Nygren to discuss the fallouts of the line-item vetoes and a path forward to support the Nation's overall comprehensive budget.

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