



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Navajo Nation Council calls on federal agencies to respect tribal identification during ICE operations**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Nation Council continues to work with federal agencies to ensure that law enforcement officials fully respect and recognize valid tribal identification during any Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations that affect Navajo people, particularly in urban areas where Navajo citizens frequently live, work, and travel.

“The Navajo Nation continues to gather facts regarding reports of unlawful detainment of Navajo citizens. Profiling people based on their appearance is unacceptable, and we’re working hard to ensure that our citizens are informed and protected. Our people should not have to look over their shoulder or endure mental distress and physical aggression at the hands of ICE personnel. Indigenous people are the first people of this country and hold inherent rights. Any enforcement action that disregards valid tribal identification places Navajo citizens at risk of wrongful questioning, detention, or separation from their families,” said Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

She added that the Navajo Nation expects federal agencies to honor tribal identification and uphold the government-to-government relationship that exists with tribal nations. The Navajo Nation Council is urging Navajo citizens to carry valid identification at all times while in public places, including their Navajo Nation identification card or a Real ID, to help prevent misidentification and wrongful detentions.

The Navajo Nation is communicating with federal and state officials, legal counsel, and other tribes to strengthen coordination, share information, and proactively address potential impacts of federal enforcement actions on tribal citizens. These efforts are focused on preventing wrongful detainments and ensuring Navajo citizens are treated lawfully and with respect.

“The protection of our citizens is a top priority,” Speaker Curley added. “We will continue to engage with our federal partners and assert our authority to safeguard the rights, dignity, and sovereignty of the Navajo people, wherever our citizens reside.”

The Office of the Speaker has also been in contact with the Arizona Governor’s Office regarding the reported detainment of a Navajo individual in the city of Peoria, Ariz.

Speaker Curley issued a letter to Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and Vice President Richelle Montoya, urging their administration to be more proactive. “As leaders, we have a responsibility to communicate and collaborate to ensure the rights, safety, and due process protections of Navajo people are upheld, and that the Navajo Nation is proactively engaged, not reacting after harmful situations occur.”

Navajo citizens may call (855) 435-7672 if they encounter issues related to ICE operations or if they have questions or concerns. The Navajo Nation Council will continue to monitor developments closely and provide updates as additional information becomes available.

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