

Navajo Nation seeks bi-partisan support for Utah Water Rights Settlement Act

Written by By Staff Reports
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WASHINGTON D.C. – President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Speaker of the 24th Navajo Nation Council Seth Damon met with U.S. Senate and House members this week to advocate for the passage of House Bill 644, the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act, sponsored by Congressman Rob Bishop, R-UT of Utah and co-sponsored by Utah Reps. John Curtis, R-UT and Chris Stewart, R-UT.

President Nez and Speaker Damon met with U. S. Senator Mitt Romney R-UT, who will sponsor similar legislation in the Senate, as his predecessor, Orrin Hatch had done during the 114th and 115th Congresses.

They also met with Sens. John Hoeven R-N.D. and Tom Udall D-N.M., the Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively, of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, to thank them for their support and to request their continued assistance in expediting the bill through the committee.

While on the Hill, the President and Speaker also met with Sens. Elizabeth Warren D-Mass., Martha McSally, R-Ariz. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., and Congresswoman Debra Haaland, D-N.M. who was recently selected to serve as the Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee and the Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands.

“This settlement is an important and essential part of building our communities and economy in Utah where many of our people still lack basic water resources,” Nez said.

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The Nez-Lizer Administration and the 24th Navajo Nation Council listed the settlement of water rights in the state of Utah as a top priority.

The Navajo Nation issued its support for the settlement in January 2015 when the 23rd Navajo Nation Council approved legislation supporting the proposed settlement. If the settlement passes, it will provide approximately \$218 million in funding for water infrastructure development projects for Navajo communities in Utah.

For more information, please contact Jared Touchin (OPVP) (928) 871-6497 and Carl Slater (OOS) (928) 871-7160.