

PHOENIX, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was among several Arizona tribal leaders who met with presidential candidate Joe Biden and vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris, during a visit held at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Ariz. to discuss tribal priorities and the Biden-Harris Plan for Tribal Nations, which was made available to the public on Oct. 8. Cindy McCain, wife of late U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona, was also in attendance.

“Today’s meeting sends a message to all of Indian Country that the Biden-Harris team is ready to work together with all tribes, including the Navajo Nation. As the first people of this country, we have to let our voices be heard at the highest levels of government when it comes to issues that impact our people and our communities. With the previous Obama-Biden Administration, tribal nations had a seat at the table throughout their two terms in office and that’s what the Biden Harris team is willing to restore if elected to office. Today was a great opportunity to engage with former Vice President Biden and Senator Harris, to let them know our priorities based on the special government-to-government relation that tribes have with the federal government,” Nez said.

During the discussion with Biden and Harris, President Nez highlighted the need for federal partners to work with the Navajo Nation to move forward with infrastructure development projects to provide clean water, electricity, broadband, and roads for more Navajo people.

Among other priorities, he also spoke about the need to improve the health care system for tribes to improve health disparities, supporting economic development, educational priorities, remediating uranium mining sites, water rights settlements, solid waste management, and improving public safety.

The Biden-Harris campaign also released its Plan for Tribal Nations which states, “Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are committed to upholding the U.S.’s trust responsibility to tribal nations, strengthening the Nation-to-Nation relationship between the United States and Indian tribes, and working to empower tribal nations to govern their own communities and make their own decisions.”

The Biden-Harris campaign engaged tribal leaders during the development of the plan, and included their input and recommendations. The plan states if they win the election, the Biden-Harris team will reinstate the annual White House Tribal Nations Conference, appoint

Nez presents tribal priorities to candidates Joe Biden and Kamala Harris

Written by gallupsun

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Native Americans to high-level government positions, appoint judges who understand federal Indian law, ensure fulfillment of federal trust and treaty obligations, promote meaningful tribal consultation, defend the Indian Child Welfare Act, and strengthen self-governance.

“Early voting has begun and we urge everyone to cast a ballot and exercise their right to vote. We appreciate the Biden-Harris team’s invitation to tribal leaders and their commitment to meeting with us face-to-face to build and strengthen that relationship with tribes and the Navajo people. We encourage all Navajo people, living on and off the Navajo Nation, to let their voices be heard by voting in the upcoming Navajo Nation, state, and federal elections,” Nez added.

Other tribal leaders in attendance included Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. Gila River Indian Community Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, Hopi Tribal Chairman Timothy Nuvangyaoma, and San Carlos Apache Tribal Chairman Terry Rambler.

