

## **Becenti-Aguilar seeks NN council delegate seat formerly held by Mel Begay**

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 20 May 2016 09:33

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### **Begay removed about 2 months ago by NN court; sentenced this week**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - Theresa Becenti-Aguilar, appointed nearly four years ago by former New Mexico governor Bill Richardson to fill a vacant Public Regulation Commission seat, will run for a Navajo Nation council delegate seat recently vacated by Mel Begay.

Becenti-Aguilar, who is from Coyote Canyon, on the Navajo Nation, will represent Coyote Canyon, Tohatchi, Twin Lakes, Mexican Springs and Naschitti.

“With the (US Highway 491) expansion, the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and the new (Internet) broadband connectivity deployment, it is now time to create short and long-range plans and build on the new infrastructure,” Becenti-Aguilar said. “Our communities reside in a great location for economic growth.”

Becenti-Aguilar, who speaks fluent Navajo, possesses a record of service that includes being a lead coordinator on behalf of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District for former president Bill Clinton’s visit to Shiprock years ago. Also she was assigned to locate five original Navajo Code Talkers who were ultimately honored at the White House by President George W. Bush and travelled with the Code Talkers to Washington, D.C., when Bush awarded them the Gold Congressional of Honor Medal, also a few years ago.

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Becenti-Aguilar won the PRC on a subsequent election, but was defeated by former state legislator Lynda Lovejoy of Crownpoint in 2014. Becenti-Aguilar, a Democrat and one of four history-making women serving PRC at the time, attended New Mexico State University, Santa Fe Business College and the University of New Mexico-Los Alamos.

About two months ago, the Navajo Nation Election Administration removed Begay after a conviction by the Window Rock District Court on conspiracy and making or permitting false Navajo Nation vouchers charges in amounts that totaled more than \$33,000. Begay was sentenced this week to three years in prison for the crimes.

***By Bernie Dotson***  
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