



The Navajo Nation  
Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees

DR. BUU NYGREN **PRESIDENT**  
RICHELLE MONTOYA **VICE PRESIDENT**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 7, 2024

CONTACT: Justin Ahasteen, Navajo Nation Washington Office Director

Email: [jahasteen@nnwo.org](mailto:jahasteen@nnwo.org)

Cell: 202-981-1215

## Navajo President Buu Nygren, Speaker Crystalyne Curley praise U.S. Senate reauthorization of Radiation Exposure Compensation Act

**WASHINGTON.** – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren today applauded the U.S. Senate’s reauthorization of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act, SB 3853.

He said the 69-30 vote marks a significant milestone that will help Navajo families.

"We are so grateful to the Arizona and New Mexico delegation for their unfailing support through this long process," President Nygren said. "We are particularly grateful for our friends from Missouri who got this bill to where it is today."

The bill was sponsored by Sen. Josh Hawley, Republican of Missouri.

If approved by the House, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act will extend deserved assistance to individuals who suffered extreme health complications because of exposure to radioactive materials from the development and testing of nuclear weapons.

Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley said the six-year extension of RECA Act is a compassionate step toward healing and acknowledgment of former uranium workers and their families.

"Let us advocate and support the extension by ensuring that every individual affected receives the support and recognition they deserve," she said.

President Nygren and Speaker Curley expressed their gratitude to Sen. Hawley, Senators Crapo, R-ID,

Heinrich, D-NM, Kelly, D-AZ, Luján, D-NM, and Schmitt, R-MO.

*"We are so grateful to the Arizona and New Mexico delegation for their unfailing support through this long process."*

*– Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren*

They said it was their tireless advocacy and commitment to the well-being of those impacted by radioactive exposure that led to passage of the bill.

Justin Ahasteen, Navajo Nation Washington Office director, attended the vote and said it was difficult for him to express how meaningful it was for the Navajo uranium workers who sat in the Senate gallery with him to watch the vote.

"We were all disappointed that our Utah senators did not support this bill, as thousands of our Navajo people live in Utah," Ahasteen said. "It is the location of so many of the mines that poisoned our people. We hope our Utah representatives in the House will do better than our senators."

The RECA Reauthorization Act now moves to the House of Representatives.

Ahasteen said the Navajo Nation will continue to advocate for the bipartisan momentum build in the Senate to ensure Navajo uranium mine workers get the help they deserve.

###

