



The Navajo Nation **DR. BUU NYGREN** *PRESIDENT*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 15, 2024

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Navajo President Buu Nygren presents State of Navajo Nation address after Council says he's tardy, votes to move down agenda to next item

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren chose to present his State of the Navajo Nation address on Facebook Live today after the Navajo Nation Council spent 45 minutes debating his being 46 seconds late and then moved on to the Navajo Nation Chief Justice's report.

"You need to be here, President. Don't laugh at us about it," chastised Council Delegate Vince James, a frequent critic of the President's. "Be here on time. So now we are all over the place."

Ironically, the President's speech focused on unity, harmony and working together. He cited the successes the executive and legislative branches recently achieved through cooperation.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the Council, when we work in unity and put our differences aside, we achieve historic things," President Nygren told the Facebook audience. "We have been able to accomplish two historic water rights settlements and save ARPA only 18 months into our terms."

Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalnye Curley was willing to have the President present his report before delegates asked that the council rules be adhered to first before a point of order was called.



Navajo President Buu Nygren returned to his office to present his summer State of the Navajo Nation address to his Facebook Live audience with his staff and division directors listening in.

President Nygren was in his office across the street when the first call to come to the council chamber was made by the Speaker. Two minutes, 44 seconds passed before she moved on to the next agenda item when the President arrived in the chamber.

Delegate Nathan Notah asked to allow the President to speak, seconded by Delegate Brenda Jesus.

When a point of order was called, Navajo Nation Council legislative counsel Mariana Kahn said there was no past precedent on how to proceed.

“The report was not removed from the agenda,” she said. “It is still there. For purposes of this particular item, the motion can be made to go back and listen to the report without amending the agenda.”

After 45 minutes of discussion, it was determined to move to Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne’s quarterly report.

“But the delegate who was loud about bypassing the president’s report and got his way isn’t even in his seat to listen to the Navajo chief justice’s report. All show,” tweeted Arizona Republic reporter Arlyssa Becenti who was in the chamber to cover the session.

Unlike his previous reports to the council that cited Executive Branch accomplishments and achievements, President Nygren spent the first half of his address citing the unprecedented benefits of the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement.

The \$5 billion settlement agreement was introduced as legislation before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives on July 8.

The second half of his address sought greater harmony with the council and asked that a minority of delegates replace useless criticism with a sense of teamwork to continue the momentum of recent big successes.

“As *naat’aanis*, we owe each other a high degree of respect and *ke*,” the President said. “When I invite you to my office for discussions, I treat you with respect and dignity. To the majority of you who treat me with an equal measure of respect when I come to these chambers – the people’s house – thank you.”

The President said he came into office with high expectations of himself and extends that to everyone who works in his office and the Executive Branch.



Navajo President listens to the council debate whether to proceed with his State of the Navajo Nation address or not because they said he was 46 seconds late to the chamber after he was called over two and a half minutes earlier.

“Let’s use the momentum of unity of our water rights negotiations as a framework to govern for the needs of our people,” he said. “Teamwork will help us achieve my ambitious plans to build 1,000 homes, fill countless potholes, build bathrooms, reopen senior centers. This has helped us create the Revenue Replacement Reserve. Now let’s work together to develop a plan.”

He said that each of the 24 delegates can help their constituents by ensuring there’s legislation to address needs for him to sign.

“Council members, harmony is the greatest teaching and greatest value of the Navajo people. I commit myself to that end,” he said. “Our role as *naa’taanis* is not to undermine other elected leaders through personal or political attacks, negative framing, derogatory remarks, insults or questioning of competence in the media. That fails to move our government forward. Nothing is gained and it’s not why we’re here.”

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