



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Speaker Curley pushes for infrastructure and water needs in roundtable discussion with House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and key congressional leaders



Speaker Curley joined key congressional leaders in Washington D.C. for a roundtable discussion on infrastructure needs in tribal communities.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Thursday, Speaker Crystalyne Curley joined U.S. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), House Minority Whip Katherine Clark (D-MA), House Democratic Caucus Chair Pete Aguilar (D-CA), and other key congressional leaders in Washington, D.C., for a roundtable discussion focused on the infrastructure needs in tribal communities.

Minority Leader Jeffries invited Speaker Curley and other tribal leaders to Capitol Hill to discuss the challenges and successes associated with the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which provided crucial funding for all tribes including the Navajo Nation.

Speaker Curley said that while the two federal bills provided avenues for tribes to address energy, power infrastructure, access to broadband internet, and water infrastructure, the delays in processing federal reviews and requirements caused some initiatives to stall. She also requested the support of Congress for the Navajo Nation's water rights claims in New Mexico and Arizona.

"Last month, the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe and the San Juan Southern Paiute approved a

historic water rights settlement agreement with the federal government, the state of Arizona and other non-Indian parties within the state. The settlement ends approximately 50 years of negotiation and litigation regarding the tribes' respective water rights."

She added, "I am raising it today because, like all other tribal water settlements, Congress must authorize it. The most significant benefit of the settlement is the proposed federal funding for water-related infrastructure to provide the tribes with a clean, safe, and reliable water supply. The funding for water infrastructure is desperately needed because more than one-third of Navajo homes still lack running water."

Regarding federal road and transportation funding, Speaker Curley stated that more federal guidance was needed to clarify how those funds can be used for road development and improvements within the federal guidelines.

Minority Leader Jeffries, who has been a vocal proponent of infrastructure investment, expressed enthusiasm about the discussion and stated that additional roundtable discussions will be hosted with tribal leaders.

"I thank Leader Jeffries for bringing tribes to the table. It's important that the Navajo Nation continue to work with leaders and members of all political parties to move our initiatives forward," added Speaker Curley.

Other congressional members in attendance included Reps. Jared Huffman (D-CA), Dr. Raul Ruiz (D-CA), Teresa Leger-Fernandez (D-NM), Gabe Vasquez (D-NM), Mary Peltola (D-AK), Troy Carter (D-LA), and Delia Ramirez (D-IL).

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