



THE NAVAJO NATION

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PRESIDENT RUSSELL BEGAYE ENDORSES DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE HILLARY CLINTON

Yá'át'ééh Shidine'é,

As President of the great Navajo Nation, I take our inter-governmental affairs and federal relationship extremely seriously. Our sovereign nation must work cooperatively with other states, tribal nations and other foreign governments, so that we can protect and create the best opportunities for our citizens. Fortunately, we as the Navajo Nation have had many friends and champions from both the Democratic and Republican parties. In my view, our tribal issues do not fit nicely into one political party. Each of the two major parties offer some policies and proposals that can benefit the Navajo people and it is important to work with both of these groups to advance our nation.

As President, I always have, and always will put the Diné people first – and that includes before any political party. As such, I have not typically endorsed a particular party or candidate for election. However this U.S. Presidential election is of tremendous magnitude with much at stake for the Navajo people. The stark difference between the two major candidates necessitates that I speak out as leader of the Navajo Nation.

With this in mind, I do not feel Donald Trump will respect our tribal sovereignty and will set harmful precedents for federal Indian policy. Mr. Trump has funded advertising campaigns that falsely accused Indian gaming of being involved in organized crime and drugs. He has also supported using the power of the federal government to deny tribal sovereignty. I have serious concerns about whether Mr. Trump would honor our inherent tribal sovereignty and respect our treaty with the United States. Finally, I cannot stand by any candidate who denigrates and belittles women as Mr. Trump's actions have shown.

I believe Hillary Clinton, as President of the United States, will be a strong partner to work with on a government-to-government level. In this campaign, she has committed to serving tribal nations through strengthening public safety, combating drugs and alcohol, advocating for access to high quality education, improving Indian health care, and fighting for our Native American veterans. As a Senator, she continued this effort by cosponsoring legislation to improve Indian health care and tribal colleges. I trust she will respect our treaty and I look forward to working with her administration on a government-to-government basis.

I wholeheartedly endorse Hillary Clinton for the office of President of the United States. I encourage the electorate of the great Navajo Nation to review both candidates' records and join me in this support. I also encourage other Indian Nations to support her as well.

I look forward to the outcome of this important election. And I also look forward to a day when we have a member of the Navajo Nation on the U.S. Presidential ballot.

Sincerely,

Russell Begaye, *President*
THE NAVAJO NATION