



## Law & Order Committee Chairwoman advocates for Judicial and Public Safety priorities in Washington, D.C.

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton (Shiprock) of the 24th Navajo Nation Council met with Congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. this week to garner support for justice centers, public safety facilities, tribal law enforcement, funding for a medical examiner position, and the Navajo prosecutor's office.

In addition, the Chairwoman met with the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the Office of Justice Services within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

Topics of discussion included investing new federal funds into the Navajo Office of the Prosecutor where court cases have been delayed or lost, leaving victims and their families with no answers or justice.

"It is an honor to represent the Navajo Nation as an advocate for our people in the halls of Congress," said Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton. "The Law and Order Committee finally received the funding formula the BIA uses to determine how much is allocated to Indian Country for our critical services. It was clear this formula needed to be updated to meet the needs of our Navajo communities."

Chairwoman Charles-Newton noted that upcoming Congressional legislation will include a fair amount of money for tribal justice systems and the public safety needs of tribes around the country.

"We learned that Congress during budget reconciliation meetings may provide over \$200 million for infrastructure projects across Indian Country," said Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton. "This means the Navajo Nation could invest these funds into the construction of new public safety facilities, a medical examiner position, and to support our criminal investigators. Indian Country is well-positioned to rebuild our sovereign nations and come out of this pandemic more resilient than ever."



PHOTO: Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton with U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders.

Yesterday, the House Reconciliation language was released that includes an allocation of \$490 million for tribal public safety and justice programs. \$715 million will be spent for road maintenance, planning, design, construction, and to address the deferred road maintenance backlog.

Chairwoman Charles-Newton represented the 24th Navajo Nation Council in meetings with Senator Martin Heinrich (NM), Senator Ben Ray Lujan (NM), Senator Mark Kelly (AZ), Senator Kyrsten Sinema (AZ), Representative Teresa Ledger Fernandez (NM), and Representative Tom O'Halleran (AZ).

“The Navajo Nation continues to be at the forefront of policy making decisions that impact tribes at the federal level,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh), “We will push Congressional leaders to pass the Build Back Better Act because this legislation is the largest investment for tribal nations in history. The Navajo Nation has to be a leader for Indian Country again.”

This winter, the Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton will return to Washington, D.C., to continue advocating for the bipartisan infrastructure bill and implementation of the Build Back Better Act framework.

#### **House Reconciliation Text:**

<https://rules.house.gov/sites/democrats.rules.house.gov/files/BILLS-117HR5376RH-RCP117-17.pdf>  
House Reconciliation Summary:

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