



## Commissioners Travel Itinerary NM Delegation Meetings

### Monday March 6, 2017

<b>Travel to DC</b>	6:00AM
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### Tuesday March 7, 2017

<b>Meeting with Senator Heinrich</b> 303 Hart Senate Office Building	4:30PM
<b>Meeting with Senator Udall</b> 531 Hart Senate Office Building	5:00PM
<b>NM Delegation Office Director Stephen Jochem</b> Hart Building	5:45PM

### Wednesday March 8, 2017

<b>Transportation &amp; Infrastructure Committee: Andrew Okuyiga</b> 590 Ford House Office Building	2:00PM
<b>Meeting with Congressman Pearce</b> 2432 Rayburn House Office Building	3:00PM
<b>Meeting with Congressman Lujan</b> 2231 Rayburn House Office Building	4:00PM

### Thursday March 9, 2017

<b>Mtg with BIA -Bruce Loudermilk</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor 1849 C Street	11:00AM
<b>Meeting with Congresswoman Grisham</b> 214 Cannon House Office Building	1:30PM
<b>Federal Highway Administration- Heather L. Dean</b> 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE	3:00PM

**Friday March 10, 2017**

**Travel to Albuquerque**

8:45AM



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The focus of our discussion are on three crucial areas:

**(1) Regional Health Care:** Operational funding for social detox as the 1<sup>st</sup> step needed for the treatment in the continuum of care that our community and all citizens can access, and rely on.

- **Gallup Detox Center:** Over the past year the detoxification and related services still struggled for funding to adequately provide services for the amount of individuals in need of care. This struggle was slightly eased by the State of New Mexico through the City of Gallup being able to use a small portion of the Behavioral Health Investment Zone (BHIZ) moneys. This BHIZ money is now prohibited from being used for social detox. Federal “Flow through” monies that prior to 2010 went directly to the City of Gallup for these very services are now held in whole by the Navajo Nation and, the City of Gallup no longer receives any of the funding that was dedicated to the border communities of the Navajo Nation. We ask that you work to restore the “flow through” monies of 1.5 million back to the City of Gallup, so that proper treatment and an expanded scope of work will benefit the health and wellbeing of our communities. Comparing last winter to this winter we are seeing no significant decrease. (2014-15 winter season there were 17 exposure deaths– To date for the winter season of 2015-16 there are 7 confirmed exposure deaths related to alcohol with a potential for more).
- Realizing that access to the “flow through” monies may be a prolonged process, we see another possibility through Indian Health Services (IHS). Data shows that 99% of individuals being served through the Detox Center are Native American. IHS has the federal mandate to provide and care for this Native American Population and has the capacity, resources, and access to funding to best serve these citizens. We believe a working relationship with IHS and the Detox Center could provide a winning alternative that would have a dramatic positive impact in this critical area of health care. Additionally through this partnership, we see that data and follow-up provided by IHS would serve to advance a stronger continuum of care provided through other community resources and agencies.

**(2) Rural Infrastructure including Transportation Corridors:** The work and facilitation that took place that our Delegation supported as guided by Representative Ben Ray Lujan, has helped immensely on our current projects. Right-of-Way issues are still a concern that affects our ability to have citizens have safe and passable roads which are critical to connecting rural populations to employment centers, schools, and other services. It is true that the County and the personnel at the Regional BIA office have established a constructive relationship but, there remains disconnect between the personnel of the regional office and Department of Interior leadership. We are concerned that the new Administration will be giving different directives or interpretations on the rules to the local regional office than what we have achieved and are working with through this period of progress.

- **Right-of Way through Trust & Tribal Allotment Land:** McKinley County has historically maintained and continues to maintain dirt bladed roads across Tribal Trust and Indian Allotment lands. Without express right-of-way McKinley County cannot improve this critical infrastructure. These roadways are critical to the safety and wellbeing of our citizens. In addition these roadways and bridges add value to the Tribal Trust and Indian Allotment properties at no cost to the owners of the property and, the express rights-of-way would increase the value to the land and wellbeing of our citizens.
- **McKinley County Roads and Bridges:** Annually over the past three years McKinley County has invested 1.5 to 2.1 million dollars per year on maintenance of County bridges and roads. Currently we have 48 bridges in McKinley



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County that were given to us from the Army Corp of Engineers after the Korean War. Of those 48 bridges, 46 are not sufficient for schools buses, fire trucks or heavy equipment to use; and this condition causes major issues of public safety for those in that community. Also, many children have to walk over the bridges to get to the buses because the buses cannot go over the insufficient bridge; or the buses have to go around the bridge to other roads that in some cases are over 50 miles one way. A majority of the citizens that are now burdened because of this condition are Native American living on their allotment or trust land.

**(3) “Water is Life” Regional health assessments and impact reports pursuant to Federal law need to be completed and or started.**

- In November of 2016, McKinley County adopted Resolution No. NOV-16-075; in support of the Dakota Access Pipeline Water Protectors in Morton County North Dakota. Our understanding is that the Protest was to make sure that the regulators and developers comply with the laws regarding environmental impact of the pipeline on the water. A copy of the resolution is attached.
- In January of 2017, McKinley County adopted Resolution No. JAN-17-006; regarding uranium mining, processing and exploration; and supporting efforts to have interested groups work with Federal and State Agencies with regulatory authority on mining. The County was asked to finance and conduct a multi-year study on the health effects from past uranium mining in our regional area. The Navajo Nation has placed a moratorium on uranium mining but has not funded any studies on the past health issues. McKinley County is not financially capable to do a regional study but can make introductions to others that would be able with expertise and finances to conduct such studies. A copy of the resolution is attached.

Contact Us:

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