

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2021

Contact: Matt Garcia-Sierra, m.garciasierra@nmlegis.gov, 505.205.5486

House GOP backs Navajo Nation opposition to Biden drill ban

Farmington, NM: House Republican leadership in New Mexico today announced their support of the 24th Navajo Nation Council's opposition to President Biden and Speaker Pelosi's drilling ban. Hidden in the \$3.5 trillion social welfare and climate change bill is a secretive "threat" to the livelihoods of Navajo tribal members according to a report from the Washington Times article from September 30th [highlighting the letter from the Navajo Nation Council](#).

The opposition stems from a provision hidden in the Biden spending bill that would ban drilling and effectively force Navajo businesses and community members to face economic hardship. In an area with limited economic options, Navajo community members work in the industry and many benefit from royalties derived from active leases on their land. The Navajo Nation government itself owns and operates pipelines and oil and gas drilling operations that would additionally be forced to shut down. The proposed federal ban follows economic blows made by New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham in recent years, with her forced closure of coal fired plants in the area that primarily employed Navajo workers.

"This is just more of the same, progressive elites come into our community to dictate how minority groups should think and behave," said New Mexico House Republican Whip Rod Montoya (Farmington). "It seems that at every opportunity the eco-left is determined to wreck economic destruction on the Navajo people with no other viable economic alternatives. Maybe if the politicians would tone down the rhetoric, perhaps we could focus on building economic prosperity in the Navajo Nation instead of dismantling what little already exists."

###