

Speech for NM Broadband Day | February 12, 2026 | Santa Fe

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Ya'át'éeéh. Good morning.

First and foremost, I want to thank Almighty God for he has truly heard our prayers and answered our prayers. Thank you.

Thank you, Governor Lujan Grisham, Director Jeff Lopez, and the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion for bringing us together today.

I would also like to recognize members of the Navajo Nation delegation, including 25th Navajo Nation Council Resources and Development Committee Vice-Chair Casey Allen Johnson, Delegate Danny Simpson, and our partners who are here with us.

I also want to give a quick shout out to Americas Communication CEO, Bernardo Portilla, and his team. Navajo BEAD would not have been possible without them. Their telecom expertise and technical capabilities are beyond amazing. Thank you.

On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I thank NTIA, the State of New Mexico, and OBAE for this historic **\$111 million BEAD award**. It is truly a new day dawning, a defining moment in Navajo history. This catapults our people to a new level never seen before.

This investment will help us to build a hybrid network of fiber, wireless towers, and LEO satellite technology, delivering reliable internet access to homes across the Navajo Nation.

It creates something far greater than infrastructure. It will connect over 11,000 households. With an average household of 4, that is over 40,000 people whose lives will be impacted.

We are talking about families, elders, students, veterans, and entrepreneurs whose daily lives will change.

No longer will our people in the most remote areas of the Navajo Nation be without the resources to call for help in emergency situations.

It means a grandmother can consult with her doctor over video instead of travelling for hours to the nearest healthcare facility.

It means families with loved ones serving in the military can do a video chat.

For our youth, Broadband turns distant dreams into attainable goals. Students can now pursue college or higher education online without leaving the Nation. Those with a passion for teaching can create online classes.

This connectivity generates opportunity for our people to get out of debt and build wealth to create financial peace for generations.

Our entrepreneurs can build businesses from home. Our artists can share and sell their work to the world.

Broadband is critical for our Nation's future. It is essential and must be viewed as foundational infrastructure, no different than roads, water, or electricity.

Studies show that an increase in broadband access can raise the GDP, and counties with high adoption have seen double digit percentage growth in per-capita income.

Expanded broadband and wireless infrastructure will significantly boost public safety by improving access to emergency services and reducing response times.

With reliable high-speed internet, Navajo can participate in emerging technologies like AI, opening doors to new careers, smarter healthcare, and highly efficient government services.

This investment helps the Navajo Nation catch up with the rest of the world and reflects what is possible when tribal, state, and federal partners move forward together with purpose.

When broadband reaches Navajo homes, the benefits do not stop at our borders. Stronger Navajo connectivity fuels regional workforce growth, public safety, healthcare access, and economic resilience across rural New Mexico.

This investment strengthens the entire state, and we are grateful to stand in partnership with the state of New Mexico as we build that future together.

Our effort is named the Connect Dine Initiative. It is a collaborative group led by the Navajo Nation Broadband Office (NNBO) and Americas Communications, with the support of Navajo leadership, President Nygren and the 25th Navajo Nation Council, and the community, dedicated to expanding high-speed internet access and advancing digital equity for Navajo communities. Our mission is **Broadband for every chapter, every home, and every phone.**

We invite you to follow **Connect Diné on Facebook** and our website.

Share the story. Celebrate the progress. Help us continue the momentum.

Ahéhee'. Thank you.