

THE NAVAJO NATION



JONATHAN NEZ | PRESIDENT MYRON LIZER | VICE PRESIDENT

December 7, 2021

Chairman Jerrold Nadler
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Jim Jordan
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for Swift Passage of H.R. 5338, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments Act of 2021

Dear Chairman Nadler, Ranking Member Jordan and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we write to express our strong support for the "Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2021" (H.R. 5338 // S. 2798). For generations, the Navajo people have sacrificed their health and wellbeing in the workplace, on the home front, and across entire communities in supporting America's uranium industry. The amendments ensure that these sacrifices are recognized and appropriately compensated, as justice requires, by the federal government. We respectfully urge the House Committee on the Judiciary, under your leadership, to favorably pass H.R. 5338 following this week's scheduled markup on December 8.

As you know, RECA provides one-time compensation to uranium workers and communities exposed to radiation from the early 1940s onward at the cost of their health and far too many lives. H.R. 5338 extends the compensation program beyond July 2022, when it is currently set to expire, and expands the program to address gaps in coverage with an eased evidentiary burden for claimants. We encourage consideration of further language that would enable RECA to reach its full potential, particularly in regard to raising the compensation caps for all categories of eligible individuals to \$200,000, expanding RECA coverage to ground workers, and expanding the list of coverable diseases to include prostate cancer, uterine cancer, ovarian cancer, and all lung sicknesses. This legislation presents a key opportunity to rectify historic omissions and to further acknowledge the sacrifices made by so many in service of their country—we urge the Judiciary Committee and Congress to seize it with both hands.

Countless individuals—from the uranium workers in the mines to the community members and children in the areas downwind of testing sites—have paid the personal price in their health for our country's national security. In solidarity with those impacted by our national actions, the Navajo Nation asks you, Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Jordan, to lead the House Judiciary Committee in the favorable markup and passage of H.R. 5338. We thank you for taking up consideration of this time sensitive and important legislation.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Jonathan Nez in black ink.

Jonathan Nez, *President*
THE NAVAJO NATION

Handwritten signature of Myron Lizer in black ink.

Myron Lizer, *Vice President*
THE NAVAJO NATION

NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

POST OFFICE BOX 7440 · WINDOW ROCK, AZ 86515 · PHONE: (928) 871-7000 · FAX: (928) 871-