



## Navajo Nation Council honors the life of former Arizona Representative Sylvia Laughter

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 18, 2022

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Today, Hon. Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh) and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council offer their condolences to the family of Sylvia Laughter, a former member of the Arizona House of Representatives who passed away on Saturday, October 15, 2022 in Mesa, Ariz.

“It is with a heavy heart that I offer my condolences to the family and friends of former Hon. State Representative Sylvia Laughter. As the first Navajo woman in a high position, Ms. Laughter always fought for the interests of her home community and the Navajo Nation,” said Speaker Damon. “Being an elected leader, Ms. Laughter brought justice and accountability for her constituents.”

Ms. Laughter is of the Towering House Clan born for the Red Running into the Water People Clan. Her maternal grandparents are of the Waters Edge Clan and her paternal grandparents are of the Many Goats Clan. Originally from Baby Rocks, Ariz., she earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Broadcast Communications with a minor in music from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, in 1993.

In 1998, Laughter was elected into the Arizona House of Representatives to represent District 3. She was re-elected in 2000 and again in 2002 after Arizona went through redistricting. Ms. Sylvia Laughter would become the first Navajo woman to serve in the State Legislature from District 2 which covers Northern Arizona and parts of the Navajo Nation.

Ms. Laughter was instrumental in creating the House Committee in Native American Affairs, which she co-chaired. Additionally, she successfully sponsored the bill to create the Navajo Nation license plates in Arizona.

Laughter was the founder of the Navajo Code Talker Memorial Foundation and completed the two Navajo Code Talker Memorials that stand in bronze at the Navajo Nation Capitol in Window Rock, Ariz. and the Arizona State Capitol in Phoenix, Ariz.



PHOTO: Ms. Sylvia Laughter, Former District 2  
Arizona Representative.

During the two terms she served, Ms. Laughter was well known for her dedicated commitment to her home community and District 2. Among the many issues she tackled, she was able to successfully secure more than \$20 million in funds for education, veterans, and senior citizens.

“Even before my time as an elected leader, Ms. Sylvia Laughter was a key figure in the development of not only Kayenta but surrounding communities,” said Hon. Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Dennehotso, Kayenta, Chííłchinbii’tó). “As a woman in the field of politics, Ms. Laughter always held her head high and remained humble towards the many families she helped.”

Funeral services for Ms. Sylvia Laughter will be held on Saturday, October 22, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. at Bunker Family Funerals in Mesa, Ariz. Public viewing will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Donations can be made via Zelle at [nakitanez@gmail.com](mailto:nakitanez@gmail.com) or GoFundMe at [gofundme.com/sylvia-laughter](https://gofundme.com/sylvia-laughter).

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