

# THE NAVAJO NATION

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JONATHAN NEZ | PRESIDENT MYRON LIZER | VICE PRESIDENT

September 8, 2020

The Honorable Senator Martin Heinrich  
United States Senate  
303 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

## **Re: Call for Congressional Inquiry into Fort Hood Army Base Deaths**

Dear Senator Heinrich,

We write to express our concerns and to request your assistance in calling for a formal investigation into the high number of recent deaths involving military men and women at the Fort Hood Army Base in the State of Texas. As you likely are aware, it was reported that Pvt. Carlton L. Chee, a member of the Navajo Nation, collapsed during a training exercise on August 28, 2020 and eventually passed away at Carl R. Darnall Medical Center on September 2, 2020. His death marked the 28<sup>th</sup> casualty involving military personnel at Fort Hood this year.

We have spoken with the family of Pvt. Chee and they have many concerns and questions related to inconsistent information and details provided by military officials. It is very troubling that while they are mourning the loss of their loved one, they are not receiving adequate and timely factual information regarding the time leading up to Pvt. Chee's collapse and what eventually led to his death. We understand that Pvt. Chee was sent to the country of Poland days prior to the incident, and the family is also requesting information as to what type of medical treatment he received as part of that trip.

In addition, our office received information from the family of Spc. Miguel D. Yazzie, also a member of the Navajo Nation, who also lost his life on July 3, 2020 while stationed at the Fort Hood Army Base. Spc. Yazzie enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2016 was previously stationed in South Korea prior to his death at the Fort Hood Army Base. His father was notified on July 2, 2020 that his son was found non-responsive on the base and was being airlifted to a hospital. The family has many questions about the circumstances of his death.

Our concern is not only for these two members of the Navajo Nation, but for the many Navajo men and women who are serving in every branch of the military around the world. The Navajo people have a long and proud history of serving in the Armed Forces at a higher per capita rate than any other demographic in the United States. This is not only a call for a Congressional inquiry, but it is a call for accountability and answers for the families that are grieving for their loved ones. As a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Forces, we believe you can bring attention to this issue. We look forward to hearing from your office on this important matter. Thank you for your service to the Navajo Nation and the United States. Ahe'hee'

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Nez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Jonathan Nez, *President*  
**THE NAVAJO NATION**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Myron Lizer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Myron Lizer, *Vice President*  
**THE NAVAJO NATION**