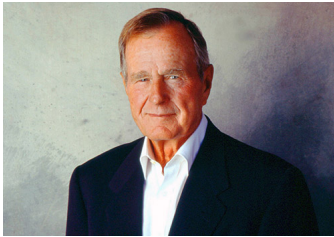


## **President Begaye honors George H.W. Bush**

Written by Staff Reports

Friday, 07 December 2018 09:12

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### **41st president was first to proclaim National American Indian Heritage Month**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — George Herbert Walker Bush, the 41st President of the United States of America, passed away Nov. 30 at the age of 94.

“President George H.W. Bush demonstrated tremendous leadership in the highest office in the world,” Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye said. “I offer my sincere respect and pay tribute to his legacy. May God bless him and his family at this time.”

In WWII, he served as a Navy pilot, flew 58 combat missions and survived being shot down after his plane took enemy fire over the Pacific.

He later graduated from Yale University, started a successful oil business in Texas, and ran for Congress where he served two terms for the House of Representatives.

Afterward, he served as ambassador to the United Nations, chairman of the Republican National Committee, chief of the United States Liaison Office in China, director of Central Intelligence and Vice President before winning the presidential election in 1988.

On behalf of tribal nations, President Bush signed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, and the National Museum of the American Indian Act, which established the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of the American

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Indian.

He was also the first U.S. president to issue a proclamation establishing November as National American Indian Heritage Month.

President Bush signed an executive order cited as the Native American Languages Act of 1990.

The executive order repudiated past policies designed to eradicate tribal languages. It developed a clear, comprehensive and consistent federal policy that determined it the responsibility of the United States to work with Native Americans to ensure the survival of tribal culture and languages.

In 1992, the year of the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary (500th Anniversary), President Bush also issued a proclamation declaring 1992 as the “Year of the American Indian.”

For the benefit of the Navajo Nation, he signed the Navajo-Hopi Relocation Housing Program Reauthorization Act of 1991. The act extended the authorization of appropriations for the Navajo-Hopi Relocation Housing Program, which was established to facilitate the forced relocation of thousands of Navajo people.