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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: Tuesday, August 1, 2017

HOLGATE SWORN IN AS ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE

Thomas J. Holgate was given the oath of office to assume duties as acting Chief Justice during a swearing in ceremony Tuesday morning in Window Rock, Ariz.

The oath of office was delivered by Associate Justice Eleanor Shirley.

The Law and Order Committee passed legislation July 31, 2017, to designate Holgate acting Chief Justice. Allen Sloan, who had been serving as acting Chief Justice since July 27, 2015, retired on that date.

Holgate, a retired judge of the Navajo Nation, is Lók'aa' Dine'é (Reed People), born for Tódich'iinii (Bitter Water). He is originally from Shonto, Ariz., and now resides in St. Michaels, Ariz. He has two sons and four grandchildren.

Holgate was appointed a judge in 1997 by President Albert Hale and retired in 2012. He served as a judge at the Shiprock and Window Rock Judicial Districts. Following his retirement, he worked for DNA Legal Services.

"I'll attempt to evaluate and assess what we have and what's been done," Holgate said. "We will stay the course on a progressive note, not only in Western ideology but in application of traditional law and refining it to serve Diné justice."

He added that the branch will continue its endeavor to fill all vacant judge positions through recruitment efforts and partnerships.

"I think we have good people on board who will do good things," he said.

Holgate also thanked Sloan for his service as acting Chief Justice.

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