



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 30, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Budget and Finance Committee receives report regarding Salazar v. Ramah Navajo Chapter litigation**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Wednesday, the Budget and Finance Committee received a report regarding the status of Salazar v. Ramah Navajo Chapter, a class-action lawsuit seeking reimbursement for unpaid indirect costs for Public Law 93-638 federal programs on the Navajo Nation from the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

According to the report provided by the Navajo Nation Department of Justice Deputy Attorney General Dana Bobroff, the lawsuit was originally filed in 1990 by Michael Gross, a former DNA People’s Legal Services attorney, in the U.S. Federal District Court for New Mexico on behalf of Ramah Navajo Chapter.

“Currently, Ramah Chapter is the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, and the Navajo Nation is a member of the class. The case went up to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the lower courts ruling that that U.S. [BIA] was liable to the tribes for all indirect and contract support costs that are a part of the 638 contracts,” said Bobroff.

Bobroff added that the U.S. Supreme Court ruling was decided purely as contractual matter stating that the U.S. cannot fail to pay indirect and contract support costs due to the lack of federal appropriations to the U.S. BIA, because it was a contractual agreement between both entities, adding that the Navajo Nation could possibly collect 90% of IDC’s from the federal government.

BFC member Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) expressed his concern regarding the amount the Nation would receive in IDC’s and contract support costs.

“I think the Navajo Nation is only getting [approximately] 60-70% [back], because it is our fault we are not requesting the whole 100% back. Like Dana [Bobroff] said, the federal government will only pay us back from what we submit,” said Delegate Simpson.

In agreement, BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) said the Navajo Nation needs to request 100% of all IDC’s and contract support costs

from this point on, and that the Nation should have been at the forefront in leading the Ramah litigation.

“I am just wondering why the Navajo Nation wasn’t the one who pursued this,” said Delegate Nez. “I appreciate Ramah for taking the bull by the horns, and I bet they are spending a lot on attorneys, and we should be funding those attorneys, because it deals with the Navajo Nation as a whole.”

BFC chair and Speaker Pro Tem, Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland), provided an update from a recent branch chief meeting with President Ben Shelly and Chief Justice Herb Yazzie, stating that the federal government is allowing the Navajo Nation to submit an assessment regarding the final amount of IDC’s owed to the Nation. The deadline to submit the assessment is July 30.

BFC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 30, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Navajo Nation Council approves \$554 million agreement to end litigation against the United States over historical mismanagement of trust funds**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Navajo Nation Council voted 13-3 to approve Legislation No. 0131-14, approving a monumental agreement that will award the Navajo Nation a total of \$554 million from the United States and brings an end to the Navajo Nation’s lawsuit against the United States over historical mismanagement of trust fund assets.

The Navajo Nation and U.S. Departments of Justice, Interior, and Treasury reached an agreement in principle over the Navajo Nation’s claims that the United States had breached its fiduciary obligations arising under treaties, executive orders, federal statutes and regulations, and contractual documents by failing to manage, invest and account for tribal trust funds and resources under the custody and control of the United States in a manner that would maximize the financial return from those assets.

The \$554 million landmark agreement is the largest single resolution in the more than 100 cases filed against the United States by American Indian tribes by more than \$170 million.

The agreement secures a successful resolution to the historical mismanagement of the Navajo Nation’s trust assets by the United States, with claims dating as early as 1946. Under the terms of the agreement, the Navajo Nation will dismiss its pending lawsuit which was filed on December 29, 2006 in the United States Court of Federal Claims.

“The agreement marks the successful conclusion of years of hard fought litigation and secures a very substantial award for the Navajo Nation,” said Naabik’iyátí’ Committee Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force chair Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins).

Under the agreement, the United States also commits to providing the Navajo Nation with all required reports of assets that continue to be held in trust for the benefit of Navajo.

The Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force comprised of Council Delegates Russell Begaye, Lorenzo Curley (chair), Charles Damon, Walter Phelps, Alton Joe Shepherd, Roscoe Smith (vice chair), Leonard Tsosie and Dwight Witherspoon, has guided Navajo Nation DOJ and outside counsel throughout the litigation.

Navajo Nation DOJ has worked aggressively to secure an appropriate resolution of this matter with the United States. These efforts have been led by Attorney General Harrison Tsosie, Deputy Attorney General Dana Bobroff, and former Attorney General Louis Denetsosie.

“It is very important for the Navajo people to understand that this agreement only addresses historical trust claims and does not prohibit or hinder our Nation from pursuing claims with respect to future conduct,” added Delegate Curley.

Task force members also emphasize that the terms of the agreement do not impact the Navajo Nation’s existing or potential water and uranium claims, and is separate from and do not impact Navajo allottee claims.

“I am pleased with the awarded amount and it demonstrates our Nation’s sovereignty as we were in the driver’s seat throughout the negotiations,” stated task force member Delegate Shepherd.

Executive branch representatives, including Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, Chief of Staff Arbin Mitchell, executive director of the Office of Navajo Tax Commission Martin Ashley, Minerals Department Audit Manager Rowena Cheromiah, Washington Office Executive Director Clara Pratte and Division of Natural Resources Principal Attorney Robert Allan, were also instrumental in providing guidance to successfully conclude the negotiations.

“The Navajo Nation sued the United States for mismanaging the Nation’s assets and resources and aggressively pursued its claims,” stated task force member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock). “This resolution resolves a matter that otherwise might have resulted in years and decades of litigation at tremendous costs to the Nation.”

Task force members also expressed appreciation to members of the 20<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council for establishing the Historical Trust Asset Mismanagement Litigation Trust Fund, which enabled the Navajo Nation to pursue its claims against the United States.

The BuckleySandler law firm has represented the Navajo Nation as lead attorneys since August 2012, and conducted the litigation on behalf of the Navajo Nation.

Sam Buffone, Andrew Sandler and Chris Regan were the firm partners that led the representation. The BuckleySandler lawyers worked with Nordhaus Law Firm, longtime counsel to the Navajo Nation who filed the original complaint in 2006. Alan Taradash and Don Grove have led the representation for the Nordhaus firm.

“We are very gratified to have helped the Navajo Nation achieve this fair and equitable agreement,” said Buffone.

Final execution of the agreement and payment to the Navajo Nation is contingent on final review and approval of the terms of the agreement by President Shelly and the U.S. Departments of Justice, Interior, and Treasury.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 29, 2014

## Navajo elders and school children receive free eye exams, eyeglasses

KAYENTA, Ariz.—Navajo Nation First Lady Martha Shelly recently launched an initiative to provide eye examinations for elders and children in Kayenta.

The One Sight Project brought a mobile eye lab to provide eye exams, screenings, and eyeglasses courtesy of Walking Shield, Inc.

Serving families since 1986, Walking Shield has followed the mission of improving the quality of life for American Indian families by coordinating programs that provide shelter, healthcare, community development support, educational assistance, and humanitarian aid.

Phil Stevens, a Lakota Sioux, founded Walking Shield, Inc. to improve the quality of life for American Indians. Walking Shield is his Lakota name.

From May 12 to 16, Navajo elders and children received eye exams and eyeglasses free of charge after signing up for the services months in advance.

First Lady Shelly said, "The One Sight Project is unique because they do eye screenings, eye exams and produce eyeglasses on site through their mobile lab."

A total of 157 Navajo elders from Kayenta and the surrounding communities received services and 99 percent received eyeglasses.

In addition, 800 school kids received free eye exams and glasses. The students were from Chilchibeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta, Pinon, Rough Rock, and Shonto schools.

During the awards dinner on May 15, First Lady Shelly said

the need for eye exams existed throughout the Navajo Nation because not all children and their families had the necessary insurance for examinations.

"In 2010, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System reduced the cost for children's healthcare, especially in the area of eye exams and dental care," she said. "In addition, we have parents and grandparents that are not working and cannot afford healthcare."

"This project is addressing those needs," she added.

For day one, the doctors served 150 elders from the Kayenta Senior Citizens Center. School kids were bussed in for the next three days to undergo exams for glasses.

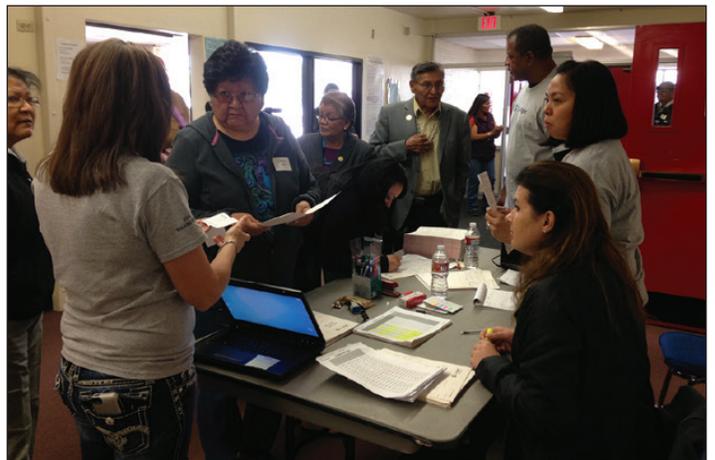
In addition to the examinations for prescriptions, the professionals from Walking Shield checked for eye diseases and other vision conditions.

The Navajo Nation First Lady's Office continues their mission of providing public outreach to the elders and children across the Nation.

"Thank you to Walking Shield for providing these desperately needed services. You have not only enriched the lives of all who participated, but opened up their view of the world," First Lady Shelly said.



President Shelly undergoes one of the final testing areas before receiving his eye prescription for eyeglasses. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



The reception area for the eye exams was busy. Elders filled out applications before going through 10 exam areas for glasses. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly went through the entire eye exam process with other Navajo elders. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

-30-





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 28, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

### **Special Session to be streamed live on Council's USTREAM Channel**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Navajo Nation Council's special session on May 30, scheduled to begin at 10 a.m., will be streamed live on the web through the Council's designated USTREAM channel.

"On behalf of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council, I invite Diné Citizens from around the world to join us live during Friday's special session," said Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland).

The special session will be held to address three separate legislations including Legislation No. 0115-14, accepting an audit report of the Navajo Nation's primary government conducted by KPMG, LLC for FY 2013. The legislation was approved by the Naabik'iyáti' Committee on Wednesday with a vote of 12-0.

Council will also consider Legislation No. 0100-14, approving and enacting the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 and Legislation No. 0102-14, approving supplemental funding from the Nation's Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$5 million for administrative activities in the Nation's 110 chapters to address local level community needs.

To view the proposed agenda for Friday's special session, please visit:

[http://www.navajonationcouncil.org/MeetingSchedules/2014/MAY/30MAY2014\\_NNC\\_Special\\_Agenda\\_PROPOS ED.pdf](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org/MeetingSchedules/2014/MAY/30MAY2014_NNC_Special_Agenda_PROPOS ED.pdf)

The Office of the Speaker continues its partnership with the Navajo Nation Office of Broadcast Services to provide the live-streaming service to the public. The live session will also be available on NNTV 5 which is available locally in Window Rock and surrounding areas.

Visit <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/navajo-nation-council> to view the live-streamed proceedings of the Council's special session. Alternatively, viewers may log onto the USTREAM home page and search for 'Navajo Nation Council' in the search box.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 27, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Naabik'iyáti' Committee disappointed in President Shelly's denial of funding for domestic violence and sexual abuse victims**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Naabik'iyáti' Committee members expressed disappointment last Thursday in President Ben Shelly's decision to utilize his line-item veto authority to deny approximately \$470,000 in supplemental funding for three separate non-profit organizations that currently provide critical services to domestic violence and sexual abuse victims on the Navajo Nation.

Council approved approximately \$470,000 on April 23, to continue services for three separate organizations including the Home for Women and Children located in Shiprock, the Tohdenhasshai Committee Against Family Abuse located in Kayenta, and Ama Doo Alchini Bighan located in Chinle.

On May 5, President Shelly issued a memorandum in which he stated that he is obligated to deny the funding based on prior compliance performance for the Home for Women and Children, reported in the 2011 evaluation report conducted by the Contract Compliance Section of the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services.

Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), who sponsored the legislation approved by Council, said the president's line-item vetoes were not in order, adding that he was unable to meet with President Shelly to discuss Council's resolution, despite several attempts.

"The services that these organizations provide are critical for our communities and should not be denied based on compliance issues that were not brought to our attention prior to the veto," stated Delegate Hale. "Compliance issues can be resolved and should not hinder assistance provided to our Navajo mothers and children."

President Shelly also stated in the memo that the three organizations have received federal funding through the DSS. However, executive director for the Home for Women and Children Gloria Champion, explained that DSS now requires the organizations to expend funds at their own expense and to receive reimbursements through DSS at a later time.

"How can you encumber funds when you have no cash to encumber funds?" asked Champion, while stating that the organization's need for funding remains a burden.

Council Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaille/Wheatfields, Tsé Ch'izhi) also expressed his disappointment and questioned the president's reasoning for denying the funding.

“He’s able to give money to the Diné Rodeo Association for a banquet and year-end awards and we have our family members and our precious children that are being abused. What is his rationale?” Delegate BeGaye asked.

Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) recommended that the non-profit organizations meet as a group to discuss their issues and to create solutions while also urging President Shelly to make the issue a top priority.

“I realize domestic violence is a monumental task,” said Delegate Butler. “[President] Shelly needs to take notice and make this one of his political platforms.”

At the conclusion of the discussion, Naabik’iyátí’ Committee members approved the report with a vote of 9-0, along with a directive to introduce three separate legislations to request funding for each of the three organizations.

Delegate Hale said the legislations are forthcoming, adding that he plans to work with President Shelly to address any questions or concerns.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



## President Shelly praises high court decision to uphold tribal sovereignty



President Shelly said the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community* strengthens tribal sovereignty. (Photo by Jared King)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly issued the following statement about the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community*:

“Tribes have won few victories at the U.S. Supreme Court in recent years, but today in a case with implications for every tribe in the country, our sovereignty was upheld. Tribal sovereignty is not an abstract concept to be curtailed at the whim of a state. It is the concrete foundation of a government-to-government relationship that has shaped the federal relationship with Native Americans. We commend the court for following precedent. The Navajo Nation remains cautiously optimistic about the ruling because while sovereign

immunity was upheld, the Court indicates other tools at the state of Michigan’s disposal that erode sovereignty.”

The Navajo Nation joined an amicus brief, which supported the sovereignty of the Bay Mills Indian Community.

-30-





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 27, 2014

## President Shelly pays respect to fallen warriors, presents wreath in their honor



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said he will issue an executive order for tribal branches, divisions, departments and programs to join in the Memorial Day celebration honoring fallen warriors at Window Rock Veterans Memorial Park. He presented the wreath of honor at the park before sunrise on Monday. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Before sunrise on Memorial Day, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and a crowd of people gathered at Window Rock Veterans Memorial Park to pay respect to the Navajo veterans that were killed in action or missing in action.

The Memorial Day event began with reveille and flag-raising ceremony. The flags were raised to full-staff before being slowly lowered to half-staff in honor of those killed in battle.

Deputy assistant director of the Arizona Dept. of Veterans Services, Mike Klier, joined President Shelly to lay the wreath of honor for Navajo servicemen and women that died in combat.

The wreath was laid on the east side of the park, where the names of fallen Navajo warriors are listed.

President Shelly said he would issue an executive order for the participation of Navajo Nation branches of government to pay respect to fallen warriors on Memorial Day.

“We’ll make it a tradition to have (a ceremony) here, with members of all our Navajo warriors,” he said. “The sun came up and my wife and I are here to join you in remembrance of our American heroes.”

Joining the president were representatives from the Dept. of Navajo Veterans Affairs, families that lost loved ones in battle, and a representative from the ADVS.

President Shelly said Navajo warriors didn’t hesitate to enlist for duty because of their love of country and their willingness to give their lives for it.

“I’ll issue an executive order for the Navajo Nation to have every program in our government be here to honor and remember our fallen heroes for the years to come,” President Shelly said.

---

***“We’ll make it a tradition to have (a ceremony) here, with members of all our Navajo warriors.”***

---

Klier has served as the tribal liaison for the agency for more than 12 years.

He said the celebration of Memorial Day goes back to the days of the Civil War, when wives and mothers would visit the graves of Confederate soldiers to decorate their graves.

“I used to be called ‘Decoration Day,’ ” he said.

Klier served in Vietnam and saw combat. He said many veterans from that era were not welcomed when

they returned home and that the country was filled with strife from racism, assassinations, impeachments and the unpopular war in Southeast Asia.

“But life moves forward. You take those things that you learned back in the day and apply them to today,” Klier said. “We want to honor those that lost their lives.”

David Nez is the director of the DNVA and a U.S. Army veteran that served in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division during the Persian Gulf War.

“Today, the Navajo Nation joins with our commander-in-chief to pay tribute to our men and women in uniform who have died in service to the United States,” Nez said.

He said Memorial Day was more than a three-day weekend, that it was a time of quiet reflection at national cemeteries and public places.

Nez said, “Today we pay tribute to the freedom fighters of every generation who gave the last full measure of devotion: World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Including those that gave their lives during the terrible years of the Navajo Long Walk. It is because of them that we are survivors living here today.”

Before the conclusion of the ceremony, Gold Star Mothers brought out their American flags to be unfolded and refolded. This ceremony not only airs out the flags and gives them a chance to breathe, but it also commemorates the fallen warriors again.

President Shelly shared the significance of the 13 folds

---

**“Today we pay tribute to the freedom fighters of every generation who gave the last full measure of devotion.”**

---

of the American flag with the surviving family members and said they could stop in at the president’s office for a copy of “My Name is Old Glory,” a poem written by Howard Schnauber.

“We thank you all for joining us early today,” he said.



*Navajo veterans posted the colors at the Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park before sunrise on Memorial Day. The flags were raised to the top before slowly being raised at half-staff in honor of Navajo veterans killed in combat. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*The color guard saluted the flags posted at half-staff before the start of the Memorial Day celebration. David Nez, a combat veteran of the U.S.. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, led the festivities. Nez served in the Persian Gulf War in the early 1990s. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*Navajo families brought their American flags to the event, so they could be unfurled and refolded by the veterans in attendance. The families of fallen warriors were presented American flags during the funeral services. In some instances, these flags are unfolded to receive fresh air annually on Memorial Day. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



## President Shelly salutes fallen Navajo warriors, issues Memorial Day statement



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly is salutes our fallen Navajo warriors that paid the ultimate price in defending the liberties of this country. He said Memorial Day is a time of honor and respect for those we lost on the battlefield. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

**T**he Navajo Nation salutes the honor and sacrifice of our fallen Navajo veterans who passed in battle.

Brave Navajo men and women stand united across the country and overseas, protecting the ideals of our American way of life. They stand in defense of freedom, democracy and the safety of those they have left back at home.

Those that passed in battle have paid the ultimate price in the protection of our traditional homelands. The Navajo Nation is a tribe of warriors.

Time and again, we have answered to call of duty and flooded the U.S. Armed Services with the highest amount of volunteers per capita than any

other demographic in the country.

Today, Navajos serve on the frontlines of war in Afghanistan, fighting against terrorism, tyranny and oppression. These valiant men and women know their efforts are for the protection of their families and friends.

Many of our veterans have lost their lives in battle and others returned home with life-changing wounds that have left them disabled.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly salutes all veterans, past and present, for their volunteerism and willingness to protect our tribal nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

“Memorial Day is a time of remembrance and respect

for those who served in the military to protect our way of life,” President Shelly said. “This is especially true for the warriors we lost on the battlefield that never made it back home.

“Ahe’hee nihi siláotsohi,” he added.

Navajo veterans have served in all the major battlefields of the 20th and 21st centuries.

From World War I to World War II, they saw combat and protected the homeland with the most sacred of weapons, the Navajo language. The icy battlefields of Korean Conflict and jungles of Vietnam brought new challenges to our Navajo veterans to overcome.

Navajos answered the call again at the Persian Gulf, in Iraq,

and once again in Afghanistan. Whenever America called, we answered.

President Shelly said, “We must answer the call of our Navajo veterans for needed services. They need assistance with housing, healthcare, jobs and other areas of their lives. They protected us and it is now our duty and responsibility to assist them.”

Take the time this Memorial Day to give thanks and appreciation for every Navajo man and woman that donned the uniform to protect their country and our Navajo way of life. This is especially true for those that paid the highest price for protecting our freedom – their lives.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 23, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

**Budget and Finance Committee receives report on budget expenditures and restructuring of family assistance programs**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Budget and Finance Committee received a report on Tuesday, regarding budget expenditures for the Navajo Nation Department for Self Reliance and the ongoing restructuring of services offered under the program, and the possibility of moving the entity under the Navajo Nation Department of Family Services.

According to the report provided by the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services director Sharon Begay-McCabe, funds are not being spent efficiently for services such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, burial assistance, and firewood distribution.

“For instance, the LIHEAP administration has an unexpended amount of 96% and direct [payment to customers] is at 58%, and the administration for [PL-93-638 federal funding] is at 62% and direct [payment to customers] at 13%,” said Begay-McCabe.

Begay-McCabe added that the lack of expending is a contributing factor for the restructuring of the assistance programs and relocating services under the Department of Family Services, which is also under the Division of Social Services.

The primary issue raised by Begay-McCabe involved assistance services that were not adequately rendered to Navajo clients, which led to concerns and complaints from constituents.

“Our people out there are waiting for wood, or waiting for assistance for their loved ones who passed away. If there is an internal disagreement between the Division of Social Services and [the Department for Self Reliance], work it out,” said BFC member Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock).

Delegate Simpson said it is unacceptable that Navajo elderly and families are not receiving assistance services immediately, due to internal disagreements that are potentially stalling client payments and firewood distribution.

Health, Education, and Human Services Committee chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (St. Michaels, Oak Springs) said the LIHEAP, burial assistance, and wood delivery programs were given

to the Department for Self Reliance because the program utilized an efficient automatic payment system that processed payments promptly.

“There was no waste, no mismanagement whatsoever, the reporting [system] was there, and the data was there,” said Delegate Hale. “[These services] have only been [under Self Reliance] for four months, and now they want to take it back. Let’s talk about it, that’s the only way we are going to fix this issue.”

Currently, the HEHSC serves as the oversight of the program’s plan of operation while the BFC oversees the financial portion of the program.

At the conclusion of the report, the Department for Self Reliance director Roxanne Gorman, said that the assistance services such as LIHEAP, was officially implemented in January and since then, 42% of the program’s funds have been expended and payments made to Navajo clients. Gorman added that no reversions of federal funding were reported for FY2014.

BFC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 23, 2014

## President Shelly disappointed with council decision to remove people's authority



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly is disappointed by the Navajo Nation Council's decision to eliminate the voting authority of the Navajo people from the federal charter for the Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Company. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Enterprises of the Navajo Nation cannot sidestep the influence of the Navajo people in their decision-making processes.

President Ben Shelly expressed disappointment with the Navajo Nation Council's recent decision to remove the agency council and president's voting authority in the Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Co. federal charter.

The agency council has the pulse of the chapters and they speak on behalf of their constituents. The removal of the agency council's five votes from the NNOGC Board will

have serious ramifications from the standpoint of the chapter members.

The voice of the people will be silenced, said President Shelly.

The council approved the charter on April 24 by a vote of 16-2. The next step is approval by the U.S. Department of Interior.

President Shelly is writing a letter to the secretary of interior to express his concern regarding the council's decision to eliminate the voting members who speak on behalf of the people.

The NNOGC is owned by the Navajo Nation and is

thereby owned by the Navajo people, he explained. He noted that the lopsided authorities in the new charter are solely to the advantage of the council.

"Leaving out the voting representatives of the Navajo people from the board is irresponsible," President Shelly said. "The Navajo people own this company and we must protect their assets.

"We need to look at this charter objectively," he said.

Sponsored by LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, T'iis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland), the legislation and amendments to the federal charter arrive more than 21 years after the company was established as a Navajo corporation.

In 1997, NNOGC was chartered as a Section 17 corporation under the Indian Reorganization Act. A year later, the federal incorporation was achieved and the entity became wholly owned company of the Navajo Nation.

The council approved the charter in 1998 and stipulated that a representative from each of the 11 standing committees of the former 88-member Navajo Nation Council would act as company shareholders on behalf of the Nation.

The shareholder responsibilities are to hold annual meetings to receive updates on the health of the corporation and they have the ability to remove board members for just cause.

A nine-member board of directors is made up of a representative from each agency and four presidential appointments. The board is

responsible for the governance of the corporation.

The removal of the president's authority to appoint board members in the current charter is a usurpation of power, according to President Shelly.

After the 2010 reduction of members in the council from 88 to 24, the standing committees were also reduced from 11 to five. The council only appointed five shareholder representatives.

These changes were not consistent with the current charter and were not approved through proper federal processes.

"In order for the NNOGC to be in compliance with proper authority of shareholders, the council needs to appoint six more to the shareholder representatives," said the president during a recent meeting with three of the shareholders.

"I was voted into office by a majority vote from the Navajo people. I am their ambassador and their voice on issues affecting them," he said.

The Navajo people own the multi-million dollar entity that is NNOGC, the President Shelly said, and the company must still answer to the people.

Unilateral control by the council is not the answer, he added.

President Shelly said, "This results in political entanglement in addition to taking away the people's say with the company. I will be contacting Kevin Washburn with the interior department with my concerns."

The Navajo Nation Supreme Court is currently reviewing the charter and will issue a ruling on its legality soon.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 21, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Law and Order Committee receives report regarding the elimination of the Equivalency Clause**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received a report regarding the recent elimination of the Equivalency Clause and the status of its implementation by the Navajo Nation Division of Human Resources and Navajo Nation Department of Personnel Management.

In 2013, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee passed a resolution amending the Navajo Nation Personnel Policy and Procedures by eliminating the Equivalency Clause to establish “minimum” and “preferred” qualifications for all positions.

The HEHSC was the final authority for the legislation.

“Because of the amendment, we realized it has been difficult to understand and implement,” said Human Resources director Bernadette Bernally. “Not every position requires a college degree, so it is not realistic to put college degrees in all employment positions.”

According to Bernally’s report, the amendment was implemented last October and since then all departments have been asked to submit a two-page Position Classification Questionnaire form to explain the minimum education and experience needed for each position. However, Bernally said that not all departments have responded, adding to the setbacks.

LOC member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) said the amendments were intended to address concerns over recent college graduates who are unable to obtain employment on the Navajo Nation due to being overqualified or lacking experience.

Delegate Begaye expressed his concern regarding the lack of cooperation from the Navajo Nation departments, specifically those who have not submitted their PCQ’s.

“Anytime we try to bring change, there is a natural resistance to it, so people ought to sit down and talk out the entire process, so when changes are made, they will remember that the best interest of the Navajo Nation should be kept in mind,” said Delegate Begaye.

In agreement, LOC member Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K’ai’bii’tó, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) added, “If programs are not turning in the PCQ’s, then they are not respecting the amendments made by HEHSC, and I think we need to get a list of these

programs that have not submitted the PCQ's so the committee [HEHSC] can assist DPM with these issues.”

LOC vice chair Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) said that since most of the employment positions require a certain type of degree or certification, the pay scale should reflect their position.

“If you are going to require an associates or bachelor's degree, then the pay scale should also be included to be higher,” said Delegate Shepherd.

Delegate Shepherd added that a large number of employees do not remain employed with the Navajo Nation due to the low pay-grade, so retention rates need to be improved and the pay scale reanalyzed.

LOC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 20, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

**Ground breaking ceremony marks the beginning of construction of  
judicial facility in Ramah**



**Photo:** Left to right, DuWayne W. Honahi Sr.- Special Agent in Charge, Ben Shelly - Navajo Nation President, Honorable Edmund Yazzie - Chair of Law and Order Committee, Cecil F. Eriacho - Ramah Navajo Chapter Vice-President, Samantha Whitetail Eagle - Ramah Navajo Chapter Executive Director, Michael Eriacho - Ramah Navajo Chapter Community Development Acting Director.

**RAMAH, N.M.** – At the ground breaking ceremony for the Ramah Navajo Detention Center last Thursday, Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who currently serves as chair of the Law and Order Committee, congratulated the Ramah community for beginning the construction of the facility.

“I know the Ramah community and I see the needs of the detention facility and police department. With the current position as council delegate, it has given us the opportunity to give back to the community,” stated Council Delegate Yazzie, who formerly served as a police officer in the community of Ramah.

Construction of the judicial center will cost approximately \$3.8 million and accommodate a total of 40 inmates. It will house two padded cells, a detox cell, booking area, detaining area, interview room, officer station, visitor check-in, storage area, medical room, and laundry room.

The judicial center is scheduled to be completed in September 2015.

Also in attendance was Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, who commended all parties for their involvement in reaching the construction phase.

“It takes a long time for an action to go through. It does not happen overnight. You thought about this and you pursued it. This is about creating jobs and bringing in revenue,” stated President Shelly.

In 2009, funding was secured by the U.S. Department of Justice through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for construction on 15 acres of Trust Land. In addition, Navajo Nation contributed \$400,000 to fund the new facility, including New Mexico TIF, CTAS Grant, Federal Highway Administration Funds, and Navajo Nation CIO Funds.

“I just want to thank the Law and Order Committee. We took many trips to Window Rock to get this going. A lot of effort and disappoints came about, but you got to be strong to accomplish your goal,” stated Ramah Chapter Vice President, Cecil F. Erachio.

Also in attendance were Ramah community members, Ramah Chapter officials, Ramah Law Enforcement Corrections, Bureau of Indian Affairs, contract and Staff.

Construction is set to begin on May 21.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 20, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives update regarding Navajo Veterans Housing Project**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Last Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received an update regarding the Navajo Veterans Housing Project.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), explained that the presentation from the Navajo Nation Department of Veterans Affairs was necessary to inform the public regarding the ongoing construction of homes for Navajo veterans.

In 2013, the Navajo Nation Council approved a two-percent set aside from the Veterans Trust Fund for the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs to construct 15 homes and to provide renovations in each of the five Navajo agencies on an annual basis for a total of four years. Overall, 300 homes are expected to be constructed for Navajo veterans.

Agency staff from the Navajo Nation Department of Veteran Affairs defended claims that the construction of veteran homes is not proceeding in a timely manner.

“For the Shiprock agency, our goal is to build quality homes for veterans. A home that will last a long time. It seems like we may be going slowly but that’s the reason. We are putting these homes together at a pace where all the workers are doing quality work,” stated Wallace Charley, veteran’s service officer for the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs Shiprock Agency office.

There are four phases of construction that include the footing, stem wall, subfloor, roofing, electrical, plumbing and drywall implementation of the new homes. Refrigerators, ovens, the septic tank and leach lines are not included in the house packages.

According to the report, the Fort Defiance Agency has constructed four veteran homes which are in the last stages of Phase II, which includes the installation of exterior and interior walling, roofing, windows and doors.

“In Tohatchi, the veteran is a National Guard. He is getting ready to be deployed back into a hot zone and he is looking forward to spending a night in his new house before he leaves. He is scheduled to be deployed to Turkey sometime in June,” stated Kendall Long, administrative service officer for the Fort Defiance Agency.

A contract with Home Depot allows the business to deliver and supply the agencies with procured bulk housing materials. Home Depot conducts 8-10 weekly deliveries from their Farmington warehouse throughout the Navajo Nation.

“The collaborative efforts and teamwork need to continue with these homes. The projects are starting to move and productivity is happening. As you know at our chapter, these projects are hindering in our area. One of the unique things that has happened is we have Home Depot on board,” stated HEHSC member Council Delegate Kenneth Maryboy (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa).

HEHSC member Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) supported the project’s initiatives by recommending that the agencies work with veterans and other departments.

“I certainly wanted to thank you for the information and I am very happy to see the progress occurring. The recommendation being provided might be also for the veterans participating in the construction work. Proposing the opportunity for their involvement, and working with other departments and agencies to see about their divisional participation,” stated Delegate Witherspoon.

According to the report, budget expenditures of veteran housing projects are increasing and overall, all agencies have spent 43% of their allocated budget.

“When this first initiative started back a year ago, we had over 100 veterans on our waiting list. We brought that down to 46. We are still actively recruiting, letting veterans know that this initiative is available to them for housing,” stated Long.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 19, 2014

## President Shelly meets on Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014



*Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with representatives from the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities and the Native American Disability Law Center to discuss issues facing disabled Navajos. Discussions focused on the need to pass the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

FARMINGTON, N.M.—The disabled citizens of the Navajo Nation have rights.

The protection of such rights was the topic of discussion during a recent meeting in Farmington to assist disabled Navajos facing a multitude of issues.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities (Advisory Council) and the Native American Disability Law Center, Inc. (Law Center) to discuss legislation going through the tribal process.

According to the Law Center, 25,500 people, or 29.9 percent of Navajos between the ages of 21 and 54 have a disability. For Navajos 64 or older, 70 percent have a disability.

“We need to do something for the disabled. They are never really filtered into the main society of Navajo,” President Shelly said. “It’s because of the laws that we have.”

He said the number of disabled citizens is increasing, especially with many veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces returning home with medical injuries from the

battlefields.

Meeting the needs of these citizens is a priority for the Navajo Nation Executive Branch, he explained and that plans are underway for an executive order for tribal divisions, departments and programs to carry out accessibility efforts on behalf of the disabled.

“The three branches need to work together to get these laws in place on behalf our disabled Navajos,” President Shelly said.

Hoskie Benally Jr., the president of the Advisory Council, said support is needed

for passage of the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014.

The act is focused on protecting the rights of the disabled and is the first time amendments have been made to the tribal statutes for the handicapped since 1945.

“Current law really doesn’t have anything about court proceedings. Every judge calls the shots on how they’re going to review the case,” Benally said. “There’s no set procedure.”

The new act was written in accordance with Navajo Fundamental Law, which reflects the Navajo expression,

t'aabi boholniih, which means it is up to the person.

“With this new proposed act we’re saying that according to Fundamental Law, all Navajos have the right for making their own decisions,” Benally said.

Current laws for guardianship of the disabled vary, based on the severity of the disability.

Some individuals require a guardian to make decisions on their behalf. Others can make their own decisions, as their disabilities are physical rather than cognitive.

However, some cases have moved forward through the courts where disabled Navajos had guardianships imposed upon them without the opportunity to address the court on the guardianship.

of the Naabik’iyati’ Committee scheduled for May 30.

The Advisory Council requested President Shelly to assist with developing three resolutions on behalf of the disabled citizens of the Nation.

The first would require an earmark of five to eight percent of the annual chapter allocations to address accessibility deficiencies at each chapter. Such deficiencies include the lack of ramps and the need for wider doorways.

The second resolution would mandate that Navajo divisions and departments pay a rental fee for tribally owned buildings to be used to address site accessibility deficiencies.

The third resolution would require private businesses

**“The ward loses all their rights, whether it be their finances, where they’re going to live or where they’re going to school. That’s what’s happening now.”**

“The ward loses all their rights, whether it be their finances, where they’re going to live or where they’re going to school. That’s what’s happening now,” Benally said.

The act has gone through public review and Department of Justice. It was also posted on the Navajo Nation Council website for public comment.

The Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 passed the Law and Order Committee on April 14 and the Health, Education and Human Services Committee two days later on April 16.

On May 16, the Naabik’iyati’ Committee reviewed the act during a scheduled work session. The guardianship act will be among legislation scheduled for review during a special session

to draft business leases in compliance with the Navajo Nation Vocational Rehabilitation and Opportunities for the Handicap Act of 1984.

“We will work on your behalf,” President Shelly said. “Your needs have not been forgotten.”

-30-



President Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly listened to issues facing the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities and the Native American Law Center. Enabling Navajos with disabilities and providing them with proper accessibility is the goal, said President Shelly. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Hoskie Benally Jr. of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities knows firsthand the challenges disabled Navajos face with their day-to-day activities. Benally went blind within a matter of weeks at the age of 22 after he contracted Retinitis Pigmentosa. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Alexis De La Cruz, an attorney with the Native American Disability Law Center said the challenges facing the disabled Navajo population are numerous. She has worked hard on the passage of the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 14, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

## **Delegate Lorenzo Curley and Nahata Dziil community members speak out against renewal of liquor licenses in border town of Sanders**



**Photo: KPNX news crew films as Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley addresses Nahata Dziil community members and Apache County Supervisor Barry Weller (District 3) at the Nahata Dziil Chapter House.**

**SANDERS, Ariz.** – On Wednesday, Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) and members of the Nahata Dziil Renewal of Hope Task Force spoke out against the possible renewal of four liquor licenses owned by Gary MacDonald.

MacDonald owns three liquor establishments, and is currently jailed and facing numerous felony charges, resulting from two search warrants served in September 2013. During the search, police seized 20 firearms and large amounts of a substance believed to be methamphetamine in the home of MacDonald.

Ole Red Barn, High Country Liquor, and Lee’s Liquor are the three establishments owned by MacDonald, and are located a few miles of one another — two of which, within walking distance for many Navajo people residing on the Navajo Nation.

Media from 12 News KPNX-Phoenix conducted on-camera interviews with Delegate Curley and community members, who shared firsthand stories of family, friends, and loved ones who have been harmed and lost their lives.

Delegate Curley hopes the media attention draws critical awareness throughout the state to the heavy hand that the establishments have had in the “destruction” and “victimization” of Navajo people — contributing to the disproportionately high numbers of deaths, accidents, rapes, and violent crimes in Sanders and surrounding Navajo communities for years.

“As victims of these establishments, our Navajo citizens have a right to speak out against the renewal of these liquor licenses that have led to destructive and tragic circumstances for their families and loved ones,” stated Delegate Curley following the interview.

Delegate Curley also stated that community members are concerned about the possibility that Gary MacDonald used revenue from his liquor establishments to fund the alleged illegal activities.

“That is a serious issue that should not be tolerated,” added Delegate Curley.

In March, the Navajo Nation Council’s Naabik’iyáti’ Committee unanimously passed Resolution NABIMA-19-14, urging the Apache County Board of Supervisors, the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control, the Arizona State Liquor Board, and any other appropriate agencies to reject the renewal of the liquor licenses owned by MacDonald.

The renewal of MacDonald’s four liquor licenses will be addressed by the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control on May 30.

Since the creation of the Nahata Dził Renewal of Hope Task Force in October 2013, chairperson Char James along with other task force members have worked with Delegate Curley, the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, Apache County officials, and other local leaders to prevent the renewal of the liquor licenses.

During the media interviews, task force member Antoinette Antoine shared personal stories of the tragedies experienced by her and her loved ones, including the death of her mother who was found deceased near the Ole Red Barn 14 years ago. She also recalled situations in which her mother was sold alcohol despite being heavily intoxicated at the time.

“When she was really intoxicated they would serve her,” said Antoine. “I’d go behind Red Barn to go looking for her and there [were] people that were drinking and just sitting there. How can you sell liquor to [intoxicated] people?”

James said similar stories are common among many local community members while noting that the Renewal of Hope Task Force is scheduled to meet on May 22, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Nahata Dził Chapter House to further address the liquor licenses.

The story is scheduled to air on Thursday, May 15 on KPNX-Channel 12 News during its evening newscast, which is available statewide.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



## THE NAVAJO NATION

# *Proclamation*

### IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO CODE TALKER CORPORAL TOM JONES, JR.

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Cpl. Tom Jones, Jr., who served in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, The late Tom Jones, Jr. was a Navajo Code Talker who served the United States of America, the Navajo Nation, and U.S. Marine Corps with courage, honor and distinction; and

WHEREAS, The late Tom Jones, Jr., service date in the U.S. Marine Corps began on November 26, 1943; and his date of separation from the Marine Corps was December 30, 1945;

WHEREAS, The late Tom Jones, Jr., was a beloved member of the U.S. Marine Corps; where he served as a messenger for the 3rd Division, Unit 297, Navajo Code Talkers 767 and Navajo Code Talkers 642 Platoons at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, California; and

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation unites and offers prayers for his family and friends during this time of grief.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEN SHELLY, President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim that all flags shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker Cpl. Tom Jones, Jr., from sunrise on May 14 to sunset on May 17, 2014.

**ORDERED THIS 13th DAY OF MAY 2014**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ben Shelly", written over a horizontal line.

**Ben Shelly, President  
THE NAVAJO NATION**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 13, 2014

## President Shelly orders flags at half-mast in honor of Tom Jones, Jr.



*Navajo Code Talker Corporal Tom Jones, Jr. served in the U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Division at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, Calif. Jones leaves behind three children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. (Courtesy photo)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.-Another Navajo hero has passed.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly ordered flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff in honor of Navajo Code Talker Tom Jones, Jr. from sunrise on May 14, to sunset on May 17, 2014.

“The Navajo Nation has lost another hero and role model to our people. We are saddened by the loss of Tom Jones, Jr. and the Nation sends our condolences and prayers to his family,” President Shelly said.

Jones passed on May 12 at San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington, N.M. after a battle with pneumonia and other medical conditions. He was 89 years old.

His service in the U.S. Marine Corps began on Nov. 16, 1943 and he was honorably discharged on Dec. 30, 1945.

Jones was a messenger for U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Division, Unit 297 Navajo Code Talkers 767 and Navajo Code Talkers 642 Platoons at Camp Pendleton.

“Our father was a private, humble, simple, caring and giving father, grandfather, brother, friend and comrade,” said daughter Carmelita Nelson. “His heart was caring, his mind was strict, his life was blessed and his soul was graceful.”

Funeral services will take place on May 17 at the Diné Christian Center in Shiprock, N.M., beginning

---

***“His heart was caring, his mind was strict, his life was blessed and his soul was graceful.”***

---

at 10 a.m.

An account with Wells Fargo Bank has been established for donations under account number 2221454164.

Jones leaves behind three children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

-30-





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 12, 2014

## President Shelly tours Cutter Lateral pipeline, meets with officials



*Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and tribal, federal and state officials met at Nageezi Chapter on May 9 before embarking on a tour of the Cutter Lateral pipeline. The officials met at Cutter Dam and were briefed on progress with the \$43 million Cutter Lateral project, which is slated for completion in 2016. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

NAGEEZI, N.M.—Drive through the Navajo chapters of Nageezi, Huerfano and Dzil Na’oodilii, one thing becomes abundantly clear: the communities are in the midst of drought.

A recent tour with tribal, federal and state officials provided a firsthand view of the conditions in the northwestern N.M. communities located on the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined chapter officials and representatives from the Navajo Nation Council, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services for a tour of Cutter Dam and Reach 22 on May 9.

The Cutter Lateral is one of two main laterals of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP).

Authorized for construction in 2009 through the BOR, the NGWSP is a basis of the New Mexico Water Rights Settlement between the Navajo Nation, U.S. and State of New Mexico.

Estimates from the bureau indicate that by 2040, a population

of 250,000 will be served by the project.

It will provide a long-term, sustainable water supply from the San Juan River Basin to 43 chapters on the Navajo Nation, the southwest portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation and the city of Gallup, N.M.

In Sept. 2012, President Shelly and former U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced an agreement for \$43 million for the Navajo Nation to design and construct a portion of the NGWSP.

The portion will provide clean water to thousands of Navajos and create up to 600 new jobs in the area.

“This project has been in development for a long time, back to my days as a county commissioner and council delegate,” President Shelly said. “These chapters are in desperate need of water and this project will address that.”

The NGWSP is separated into 27 reaches for construction.



The BOR states that the beginning of a reach is typically the location of a turnout that will deliver water to communities. The two main laterals of the project features 270 miles of pipeline.

Cutter Lateral will provide water to the eastern side of the Navajo Nation and a portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. Reaches 21 through 26 are in the Cutter Lateral segment of the project.

The San Juan Lateral will begin at the San Juan River near Kirtland and stretch south along U.S. Route 491 through Gallup. Reaches 1 through 20 and 27 are in the San Juan Lateral of the project, with extensions to Crownpoint, N.M. and Window Rock, Ariz.

BOR construction engineer Barry Longwell facilitated the tour of Cutter Dam and provided information on the project.

Constructed in the early 1970s, the Cutter Reservoir was completed in 1974 and has provided water to the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project since. About 80,000 acres is under irrigation presently.

He explained that when the dam was built, a pipe was constructed through the bottom portion of the reservoir to release water when the dam was low.

“That’s where we’re going to tie into to get water for the Cutter Lateral,” Longwell said. “That will be our pipeline that will be taking water out to all of your communities around Highway 550.”

The 27-inch conduit that extends into the reservoir is where the Cutter Lateral begins. The BOR will be doing modifications to the concrete down at the bottom of the vault, including the pipe gaskets and joints.

We want to ensure the pipe doesn’t leak, so we’re going to put steel bands inside that pipe where and gaskets and joints and seal those, he explained.

“They’re 40 years old now. We don’t know what condition they’re in, so we’re going to seal them and make them water tight,” Longwell said.

A new vault and a T will be constructed for the Cutter Lateral pipeline to hook into for water delivery. The pressure from the reservoir will be used to push the water down to the other side of Blanco Canyon, the site of the first pumping plant.

Longwell said the purpose was to reduce the amount of infrastructure in the remote location to keep costs low.

President Shelly expressed appreciation for the tour of the dam and explanation of its proposed Cutter Lateral use for Navajo chapters.

“For our chapters and communities in the Eastern Navajo Agency, the water is coming. All of you leaders from the eastern agency and agency council have a lot of planning to do,” he said.

“It’s great to see the progress that is being made on this project after so many years of development and discussions,” President Shelly said. “We will continue working together to serve the needs of the Navajo people.”



*Top, a panorama of the Cutter Reservoir, which saw final construction in 1974. Since then, it has provided water to the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project. Above, the Bureau of Reclamation modifications for the Cutter Lateral project. (Photos by Rick Abasta)*



*President Shelly met with federal, state and tribal officials during the tour and briefing of the Cutter Lateral project. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 9, 2014

## President Shelly encourages honor and love for Mother’s Day



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly share a message of love and honor for Mother’s Day. They encourage a day of celebration and family for Navajo moms. Happy Mother’s Day! (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly issued a statement on May 9 for Mother’s Day 2014.

“On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I wish all mothers a happy and relaxing Mother’s Day,” President Shelly said.

Our mothers and women are the cornerstone of Navajo tradition and culture,

especially since we are matriarchal society, he noted.

Mother’s Day is a time of honoring the love and teachings from our mothers.

“Our mothers are the first people to teach us, to care for us,” President Shelly said. “They teach us the basics of life and the difference between right and wrong. They are

our first teachers.

“Respect your mothers and take the time to celebrate Mother’s Day with them,” he added.

This Mother’s Day, do something special for your mom to let her know your appreciation and support for her parenting. Whether it’s a barbecue, a trip to the movies or dinner at a special restaurant, show your

mom love for all she’s done.

Happy Mother’s Day!

-30-





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 9, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives report from the Navajo Head Start Program**

**FORT DEFIANCE, Ariz.** – On Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee accepted a report regarding the Navajo Head Start Program.

The Head Start Program seeks to empower children and their families in Navajo communities by offering a variety of services such as dental, vision, nutrition, behavior development and mental wellness, according to their website. The program is divided into land sections that serve each of the Nation’s five agencies.

Olin Kieyoomie, policy council president for the Head Start Program, said the program is ready to become its own separate entity similar to Diné College and Navajo Technical University.

“The problem that faces us, is external. Currently we have 96 qualified Head Start teachers that have a masters or bachelor’s degree ready to work here on the reservation, but the qualification forms are stuck at the Department of Personnel Management,” stated Kieyoomie.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) recommended the committee write a letter to the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, inviting several entities to assist in moving this initiative forward.

“Certainly invite Head Start, committee members, and the policy council to discuss the options of how to essentially become separate—either as a school district or enterprise—to begin to manage on their own,” stated Delegate Witherspoon.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) questioned the timing of the proposal by Head Start.

“I do speak in support of exploring ways Head Start can be independent. But I am not 100% sure yet and convinced that they can fully manage it. You know the history. You had a very rough history with Head Start. I think maybe a couple of years, three years from now, perhaps we can explore that option,” stated Delegate Butler.

In 2006, the Administration for Children and Families forced the shutdown of the program when it was found that a number of Head Start employees had criminal history. This action subsequently threatened the status of federal funding for the Head Start Program.

Since then, funding has been restored and the program continues to rebuild.

“Head Start is one of the oldest programs , since 1965, this program has been on the Navajo Nation. After this review, I think that would be a really good step in introducing something at summer session before Council. We do understand the challenges that we face,” stated Kieyoomia.

HEHSC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 9, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Naabik'iyátí' Committee enables Navajo communities to pursue federal assistance through the Promise Zones initiative**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Naabik'iyátí' Committee on Thursday voted 12-1 to approve Legislation No. 0073-14, authorizing the submittal of one or more applications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture to have one or more regions on the Navajo Nation selected as Promise Zone(s), including but not limited to the Former Bennett Freeze Area and the Navajo Partitioned Lands.

The Promise Zones initiative was announced by President Barack Obama in January 2013, in an effort to revitalize high-poverty communities across the country. The initiative allows the federal government to partner with and invest in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities to create jobs, increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, leverage private investment, and reduce violent crime.

The Naabik'iyátí' Committee serves as the final authority for the legislation, which also authorizes Council Delegates, the Navajo Nation President and Vice President, and their designees to advocate for one or more areas to be designated as Promise Zone(s).

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) said the initiative has the potential to benefit many communities throughout the Navajo Nation, adding that President Ben Shelly has assigned staff to assist with the development of applications and to discuss the matter with Navajo communities.

“This is an opportunity that should be appealing to all of us to help our communities,” said Delegate Phelps, who also encouraged his committee colleagues to submit applications on behalf of their respective communities.

The federal initiative will designate a total of 20 Promise Zones across the U.S. by 2017. The first round of applications were submitted in November of 2013 and in January, the Obama administration designated five Promise Zones, which included the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Selected designees receive benefits which include increased access to proven tools to help carry out strategies, preference for certain competitive federal programs, and technical assistance to make the most of funding that is already available.

During the discussion, committee members also approved an amendment proposed by Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) to include communities impacted by the 1974 Relocation Act to be considered as a Promise Zone designee.

Naabik'iyátí' Committee members approved the amendment with a vote of 9-3.

Delegate Phelps said a public meeting to discuss the Promise Zone initiative is scheduled to take place on May 15 at 9 a.m. at the Leupp Chapter House.

Following the Naabik'iyáti' Committee's approval on Thursday, Delegate Phelps said the next step is to engage the federal agency representatives who can provide technical support in moving forward.

"Our May 15 public meeting will be a great opportunity to not only provide public information, but to also bring key stakeholders together. We will follow the guidance provided for tribal application submissions. I expect that the process toward developing a successful application is going to be extremely competitive," Delegate Phelps stated.

For information regarding deadlines, criteria, and other information, please visit:  
<https://www.onecpd.info/promise-zones>.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT FOR SELF RELIANCE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 8, 2014

Contact: Delilah Goodluck, Senior Public Information Officer | [delilah.goodluck@nntanf.org](mailto:delilah.goodluck@nntanf.org) | 928.810.8553, ext. 2132

**Department For Self Reliance Earns Congratulations from U.S.  
Department of Health and Human Services Officials**



**DSR Assistant Department Manager, Deannah Neswood-Gishey reports to HHS Officials about the transfer of LIHEAP and P.L.-93 638 programs beginning January 2014.**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - On April 22, 2014 the Navajo Division of Health (NDOH) and the Navajo Division of Social Services (NDSS) hosted the Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, AZ for the annual U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Navajo Regional Tribal Consultation.

The Tribal Consultation takes place to allow Tribes and the federal government the opportunity to speak and respond directly to the issues and concerns of each entity.

NDSS's Department for Self Reliance (DSR) and Department for Family Services (DFS) were given an opportunity to speak on behalf of their programs.

Page 1 of 2

Deannah Neswood-Gishey, DSR's Assistant Department Manager explained the program had grown into a department. "The newly named DSR now administers the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), General Assistance (GA), Burial Assistance (BA) and Emergency Assistance (EA) as well as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)" stated Neswood-Gishey.

NDSS requested to HSS that the DSR's Tribal TANF program maintain its current funding, maintain its unobligated funds in reserve and keep its flexibility to design and operate the program.

"Our issue with TANF is to maintain the flexibility because we have approved work activities that the states do not offer. For example, we have Traditional Practitioners on the Navajo Nation. We are in a unique area and our population has different activities from the states of how they want to grow and develop self-sufficiency," stated Neswood-Gishey.

NDSS also requested to increase the administrative cost cap for the DSR's LIHEAP to be able to hire more employees to assist with LIHEAP's high demand and to award LIHEAP funds before the end of the previous physical year in order to provide heating assistance in a timely manner.

Neswood-Gishey stated, "LIHEAP serves the most in need with the highest energy burden. DSR's LIHEAP program also has a priority system in which the elderly, disabled and children under the age of five in the household are our highest priority. We are finding through our statistics, that we have been achieving the true intent of LIHEAP." Neswood-Gishey continues on to say, "the average head of household age is 59 years old. The average Income for the LIHEAP customers served is \$806 per month. 90% of applicants are under 110% of the national poverty guideline."

There were many congratulations to the DSR in regards to its LIHEAP and TANF program.

"Let me congratulate you on LIHEAP. You are doing a great job on LIHEAP. Some of the things in your issues however may take some legislative changes, but keep doing what you are doing because that is what it is all about. And congratulations on your 35% TANF work participation rate," stated Leon R. McCowan, ACF Regional Administrator, Region Six.

In the spirit of a job well done, Neswood-Gishey brought the LIHEAP Federal Compliance Review to the HSS's attention, "A few months ago Lauren Christopher of ACF and Margarita Valladares of ACF's Region Nine had done site visits on the Navajo Nation. They were very impressed with our services and stated that we had raised the bar for LIHEAP. Our practices would be the comparison for the other visits they were going to make to the other states and tribes."

The requests were appreciated by the federal officials as stated by, Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans, Lillian Sparks-Robinson, "thank you for framing it the way that you did, because that allows us to really understand what the issue is and what the impact is, and what you are requesting for us to take back to Washington D.C. It allows me to have the conversations with my colleagues about TANF, and the LIHEAP dollars, and how they are being put to good use."

For more information please contact, DSR's Public Relations section at 928-810-8553.

###



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 8, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Resources and Development Committee receives update regarding the proposed Grand Canyon Escalade Project**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee received a report regarding the Grand Canyon Escalade Project.

According to the report, if constructed, the Grand Canyon Escalade Project would be considered a world class destination that would offer a trip via tramway to the bottom of the Grand Canyon as well as amenities including music, dining, shopping and sightseeing.

“There are two main agreements that we negotiated within the last year and a half. The first one is the master agreement. It is the framework for the development of the operations project,” stated Michael C. Nelson, attorney and project management team member for the Grand Canyon Escalade Project.

If authorized, the project would begin construction in the spring of 2017 and estimates suggest that the project would create hundreds of jobs at the proposed site.

“The Navajo Nation will receive a franchise fee of 8% to 18% of gross revenues based upon visitor volume. This project will be sustainable because the tourists are already here,” stated Eunice L. Tso, also a project team manager and consultant.

For more than 20 years, the Grand Canyon National Park has averaged more than 4 million visitors annually according to the report.

Although, the proposed project offers economic incentives, issues regarding sacred sites continue to be raised among Navajo communities.

“About sacred sites, we understand that that is a big issue for some people. We’ve reached out to the medicine men in the area, as many as nine, have written in support of the project. We continue to reach out to the medicine men in the western area that understand the significance of the area and working with them to further educate ourselves,” stated Tso.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) questioned the communication between the Diné Medicine Man Association and the Grand Canyon Escalade Project team.

“We encouraged you at another one of our meetings a long time ago, to have a visit with the Medicine Man Association. We did encourage that at that time because of the confluence and raising cultural and religious significance of the project,” stated Delegate Tsoosie.

Nelson assured the Council members that the project team has met with the Diné Medicine Man’s Association to discuss the issues.

“As far as meeting with the medicine men, we have reached out to them, we have met with a number of them, and we have taken a number out there. I would say that they are not unanimous in their views on what happens down there. It is difficult to say if there’s a consensus,” stated Nelson.

The proposed project would require approval from the Navajo Nation Council.

RDC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 8, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Budget and Finance Committee receives report on the gaming revenue distribution policy**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Budget and Finance Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller on Tuesday, regarding a proposed gaming revenue distribution policy that would allocate funds to Navajo chapters to aid local level programs and administration.

Controller of NNOOC Mark Grant, said that his office and BFC members held an educational seminar for chapter officials at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort in March, to inform chapters of the proposed policies regarding the distribution of gaming revenues.

“The National Indian Gaming Commission has informed us of two concerns regarding the [Navajo] Nation’s gaming revenue distribution policy. First, the distribution to the chapters would be considered a per capita payment, and second, any priority given to host chapters could possibly be considered discriminatory or preferential treatment, which is not allowed,” said Grant.

According to the National Indian Gaming Commission, tribes can only distribute gaming revenues to local governments, charitable programs, economic development, and per capita payments to individual tribal members or groups.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) expressed his concern regarding the two issues raised by the NIGC.

“Since NIGC said that this might look like per capita, what is the process of getting that approval?” asked Delegate Nez. “Most of the gaming tribes out there are very small in population and it is easier for them to distribute to their members individually, but Navajo is very large, so I guess this is something that may have never been done before.”

In response to the concerns, Grant informed the BFC that the Nation would indeed have to meet with the NIGC to go over the gaming revenue distribution policies, develop solutions, and seek approval from the commission to move forward with allocating the funds to the chapters.

BFC member Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si’ání, Wide Ruins) said he did not understand why the NIGC did not recognize the chapters as local

governments, when federal entities such as the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and other governmental bodies acknowledge the Navajo Nation's governmental structure.

Navajo Nation Department of Justice attorney Karis Begaye said that her office would communicate the BFC's concerns to the NIGC regarding the chapters being recognized as local governments.

"It's sad that we already brought the chapters and programs into this, and we do not even have our stuff in order with the NIGC and the allocation of funds," said BFC member Council Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaille/Wheatfields, Tsé Ch'izhi).

Delegate Nez also said that after the issues have been addressed with the NIGC, the Nation's focus would be to ensure funds are allocated as soon as possible to the Navajo chapters.

"I have had chapter officials approach me regarding the gaming [revenue] distribution policy and were requesting updates on the allocation of the funds, so I think it is important to get them the most updated information as soon as possible and keep them informed," said Delegate Nez.

BFC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 8, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

**Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates holds  
directors meeting with Legislative Branch programs**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) held a meeting on Wednesday with the directors of each of the 11 programs under the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch to receive update reports and to address concerns.

“As part of my Speaker Pro Tem obligations, I felt it was important to hold this meeting to get a grasp of where these programs are at and what we need to do to ensure that all program projects continue to move forward, as well as voice any concerns regarding any issues that need to be corrected,” said Pro Tem Bates.

Programs under the legislative branch include: Office of the Speaker, Office of the Auditor General, Office of Legislative Counsel, Office of Legislative Services, Navajo Labor Commission, Navajo Election Administration, Navajo Utah Commission, Navajo Eastern Land Commission, Navajo Human Rights Commission, Office of Navajo Government Development, and the Navajo Ethics and Rules Office.

Interim Chief of Staff Leonard Gorman facilitated the meeting, and encouraged the directors to identify their program goals and to begin strategizing for the upcoming annual comprehensive budget session. He also urged each director to begin assessing their programs internally to ascertain what areas need improvement or adjustments.

Program directors expressed concerns regarding the status of their programs, as well as offered possible solutions.

Director of the Navajo Eastern Land Commission Larry Rogers, suggested that they meet on a regular basis to provide updates regarding their programs to improve communication.

“I like meeting like this and being able to see what the other programs are working on, and I hope we can continue these meetings because it is beneficial to communicate with one another,” said Rogers.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Gorman said he hopes to continue the Program Director's meetings to ensure that each area receives adequate attention and resources that will lead to improvements.

"Just to conclude our meeting, I certainly think that it's important that we come back together and exchange ideas and thoughts. We are a unit, and there is a need for the continuation for these types of discussions to ensure the branch is very effective and efficient, it's very important," said Gorman.

Gorman said that the director meetings will occur on a monthly basis.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)

**LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**  
**NAVAJO NATION**



**HONORABLE LORENZO BATES**  
*Speaker Pro Tem, 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council*

May 7, 2014

**Statement from Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates**  
**regarding Window Rock District Court Case No. WR-CV-109-14**

Diné Citizens and Members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council:

As Speaker Pro Tem of the Navajo Nation Council, I respect today's action by the Window Rock District Court to refer Case No. WR-CV-109-14 to the peacemaking program. This action provides Council with guidance and direction to consider. Meanwhile, the Legislative Branch and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council continues to function effectively to serve Diné Citizens and to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the government.

Honorable LoRenzo Bates  
22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 6, 2014

# President Shelly signs CIP five-year plan into law



Top, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signs the Navajo Nation Five-Year Plan into law as Leonard Chee, George Apachito, LoRenzo Bates, Katherine Benally and Jonathan Nez look on. Bottom, President Shelly shares the history of the capital improvement projects plan with listeners of KTNN AM 660 during the live remote broadcast from the Navajo Nation State Room. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK—It took almost 14 years to complete.

On May 5, President Ben Shelly signed the Navajo Nation Five-Year Plan into law and finalized 14 years of effort for prioritizing capital improvement projects.

During the spring session last month, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0118-13 and recommended for approval to President Shelly the Navajo

Nation five-year capital improvement projects plan.

The multi-year plan is for capital expenditures, including a detailed one-year capital improvement budget. The priority list includes anticipated project costs, source of capital funds to complete projects, completion dates, and priority rankings.

The CIP plan includes various infrastructure projects, such as bathroom

additions, house wiring, power lines, waterlines, buildings, wastewater treatment plants, parking lots, roads, sewer lines, and heavy equipment.

## Cause for Celebration

The mood was celebratory as President Shelly penned his name to the legislation.

The five-year CIP plan from 2013 to 2017 totals \$295,669,676.35 for projects from the 110 chapters.

The Division of Community Development, along with the Capital Improvement Office, hosted a barbecue luncheon at the Window Rock Veterans Park to kickoff the festivities.

President Shelly and members of the Navajo Nation Council provided remarks about the achievement during the luncheon, before sharing the news with the Navajo people during a live remote broadcast with KTNN AM 660 at the Office of the President and Vice President.

## Navajo Nation Council

Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) said the CIP plan from the 110 chapters was a major legislation that involved a lot of effort from tribal leaders and provided a blueprint for infrastructure development moving forward.

She mentioned that perhaps the interest from the Permanent Trust Fund could be utilized to fund the projects for the 110 chapters.

“Thank you to the Resources and Development

Committee. We stood strong and worked on this. By a vote of 19-1, it passed Council. Thank you, delegates,” Benally said.

LoRenzo Bates (Nenahezad, Newcomb, San Juan, T’iistoh Sikaad, Tse’ Daa’ Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said passage of the CIP plan was a new beginning for the Navajo Nation.

“We’re moving forward in improvements that are needed at the chapter level, as well as at the central government level,” Bates said. “This has been in the making for nearly 14 years.”

He noted that the 2014-2015 budget for the Navajo Nation is the first time there will be no waiver of the Appropriations Act because of the unavailability of a five-year plan.

“The next big step is to fund these projects,” he added.

Jonathan Nez (Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Shonto, Tsah Bii Kin) gave appreciation to President Shelly and the 22nd Navajo Nation Council for moving the initiative forward.

“I want to say to the Navajo people that this is your voice and a lot of the chapter officials deserve great kudos,” Nez said. “I want to thank each and every one of them for bringing their project listings to the Council.”

He added that there is still time for chapters to submit proposals.

“At the end of the day, as President Shelly always states, ‘It’s about job creation.’ I believe there will be a lot of

job creation as a lot of these projects go into construction,” Nez said.

Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) said he was thankful for the careful deliberation from tribal leaders to approve the CIP plan.

“There are many challenges facing our people. We need roads for our school kids,” Hale said. “We are thankful for this legislation moving forward.”

George Apachito (Alamo, Ramah, Tohajiilee) agreed with his colleagues and said it was time to address the many needs out at the chapters, such as new buildings for the Navajo Head Start students.

He gave thanks to the vision and leadership of the Resources and Development Committee, Health and Human Services Committee, and Speaker Pro Tem Bates.

“To our Navajo people, these are your funds. We will be moving forward on your behalf. Ahe’hee,” Apachito said.

community needs, he said, and noted that task forces were formed to conduct real property inventory and identification of chapter boundaries.

“We have nearly \$2 billion in the Permanent Trust Fund and the interest from that is \$295 million, enough to fund these projects,” President Shelly said. “A lot of hard work went into working on this project listing for almost 14 years.

“We must combine our savings and leverage them against other funding sources to get this work done,” he added.

President Shelly said thanks and gratitude must be given to the past leaders that had a hand in developing the CIP plan, from Peterson Zah, Edward T. Begay, Albert Hale and Kelsey Begay.

“People say there’s bad things happening in Window Rock. That’s not what I see. I see planning and tribal leaders working together to move this



During the luncheon at Window Rock Veterans Park, attendees enjoyed hamburgers and hot dogs in celebration. OPVP Budget Manager Marjorie Johnson points to the food on Cyndy Taylor’s plate. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

## **“I see planning and tribal leaders working together to move this Nation forward.”**

### **Working Together, Making Change Work**

President Shelly was the final speaker for the KTNN live remote broadcast.

“This effort has been ongoing since 1998, during the days of the 88-member Navajo Nation Council, under the guidance of the former Transportation and Community Development Committee,” President Shelly said.

He said the CIP plan came directly from the Navajo chapters for infrastructure development.

They have conducted assessments for their

Nation forward,” he said.

“As leaders, we make decisions for the benefit of all. There’s three branches working together. Now’s the time to get working on behalf of your communities,” President Shelly said. “Together, we’re making change work.”

-30-



Left to right, Casey Begay, Jonathan Hale, Jonathan Nez, LoRenzo Bates, Leonard Chee, George Apachito, President Shelly, Katherine Benally. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 6, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

**Council Delegates participate in signing ceremony  
for the Navajo Nation's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan**



**Photo: From left, Capital Improvement Office manager Casey Begay, Honorable Jonathan Hale, Honorable Jonathan Nez, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates, President Ben Shelly (sitting), Division of Community Development director Leonard Chee, Honorable Katherine Benally, and Honorable George Apachito.**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) were among several delegates in attendance as Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed into law Council Resolution CAP-18-14, the Navajo Nation Chapters' Infrastructure Improvement Priority Projects listing, for Fiscal Years 2013 through 2018.

The Capital Improvement Plan required coordination from nearly all of the Nation's 110 chapters to gather data and chapter resolutions over the course of several years and is viewed as a monumental achievement by many delegates and President Shelly.

Delegate Benally, who served as the primary sponsor of the legislation which was passed by Council on April 22, thanked her fellow Council colleagues for approving the capital improvement

project listing and also expressed appreciation for past leaders, including former Navajo Nation Chairman and President Peterson Zah, for laying the foundation years ago.

Although the five-year CIP is now in place, Delegate Benally said the next major step is to secure funding to begin construction of the projects.

Pro Tem Bates called the initiative a “new beginning” for the Navajo Nation, adding that the Council will soon revisit possible funding sources.

“As early as this week we will sit down and begin looking at the alternatives that we as a Nation have in funding these projects,” said Pro Tem Bates. “Hopefully, as early as the summer session, we’ll have something to bring to the Navajo Nation Council to consider funding these projects.”

The priority listing was developed over the course of several years by the Navajo Nation’s Capital Improvement Office and includes numerous projects such as, government buildings, chapter houses, senior citizen centers, waste and water systems, parking lots, and judicial facilities.

Also in attendance was Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin), who thanked chapter officials for their contributions in developing and submitting project proposals and said the construction of the projects will improve the Nation’s economy and also create much needed jobs for Navajo people.

“With the President’s signature, we honor the collective hard work by many who contributed to the five-year plan, in particular, our chapter officials and staff from across Navajo land,” Delegate Nez stated. “I just want you all to know that you are greatly appreciated and your hard work is not going unnoticed.”

Co-sponsor of the legislation Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), said the signing of the resolution signified the culmination of years of hard work between delegates and chapter officials.

“This is an effort that took cooperation from all sides to develop a plan that will lead our Nation on the path to a prosperous future for our Navajo people,” said Delegate Hale.

The occasion marked the first time a five-year CIP has been approved and signed into law.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 5, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

**Health, Education, and Human Services  
Committee receives annual report from Diné College**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Last Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received the 2013 Diné College Annual Report, presented by Dr. Maggie George, president of Diné College, located in Tsaile, Ariz.

According to the report, Diné College is a two-year community college that is offered to a growing number of Navajo students throughout the Navajo Nation. Currently, there are six college campuses that are a part of the multi-campus system.

“In March, we had a visit from the Higher Learning Commission where we submitted the proposal to offer a Bachelor of Arts Degree in business administration with a focus on tribal management and entrepreneurship. They approved our proposal and it is going through the stages and we should hear from them sometime in May,” stated George.

In addition to offering degrees and certificates, Diné College offers a GED program in partnership with Navajo Nation Workforce Development and the State of New Mexico. Since starting the GED program, a total of 206 students have graduated.

“A couple years ago, we started looking at dual credit or access to higher education. We started in the fall and in the last year, we have entered 20 dual credit agreements with local high school districts,” stated George.

A total of 186 students will graduate from Diné College this May, with various degrees including Bachelor of Arts in Education, Associate of Art, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science and certificates, according to the report.

The first Navajo Community College was established in 1968, which later became Tsaile’s Diné College.

For the last three years, Diné College has been working on a congressional mandate facility study with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to reevaluate the Navajo Community College of 1968. There was a 36-year-old mandate for the BIA to conduct facility studies but which has yet to be accomplished.

“I know that the K-12 schools, the grant schools, and the old BIA schools, there’s years of being on the improvement list and there’s funding. I’m just thinking there seems to be a different

approach when it comes down to college campus,” stated HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii).

HEHSC vice chair Council Delegate Charles Damon, II encouraged the committee to support Diné College representatives in obtaining additional land for improvement.

“We will write a letter of support from the committee, if that is okay with all the community members,” stated Delegate Damon.

According to the report, Diné College is the first tribally controlled community college in the United States, fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association in 1976. About 52% of Diné college faculty is Native American.

“We are the first tribal college and over 46-years- old this year. Our buildings, especially at our administrative campus in Tsaile, is a challenge to keep up. I want to respectfully request that the Navajo Nation work with us to create a permanent construction funding source,” stated George.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 5, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

**Law and Order Committee approves amendments to the  
Navajo Nation Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act of 2012**

*Authorizes a referendum on term limits for Council Delegates and President*

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Thursday, the Law and Order Committee approved three important legislations, the first regarding amendments to the Navajo Nation Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act of 2012, and two separate legislations concerning term limits for Council Delegates and the President.

Legislation No. 0101-14 aims to amend the NNSORNA to include provisions to improve the timely apprehension of sex offenders who fail to register or abscond, require registration of sex offenders convicted prior to 2006, and to meet the U.S. Congressional guidelines to safeguard the public from sex offenders through stringent registration requirements.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) who sponsored the legislation, said that one of the major challenges of the NNSORNA is addressing absconders, or sex offenders who fail to register with the proper law enforcement agencies.

“We spent a year to almost a year and a half on this issue, and this legislation basically puts in those elements that are missing to address the issues of absconding,” said Delegate Shepherd.

Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety Information Management Section program supervisor Orlando Bowman stated that in addition to offenders absconding, the NNSORNA also takes into account the geographical location of sex offenders on and off the Navajo Nation.

“We want to make sure that sex offenders are properly identified through registering with all agencies in the area, so we closed some loopholes for sex offenders that live, work, or go to school on the reservation,” said Bowman. “For instance, if they live in Gallup and work in Window Rock, they will be required to register on both sides.”

Perry Yazzie, manager of the Navajo Nation Office of Background Investigations, submitted a public comment regarding the sex offender reporting systems.

“Our concern is that the sex offender registration managed by agencies at the federal, regional, state, and local levels do not really coordinate with each other and have a lack of communication between one another,” said Yazzie. “It is important to get comprehensive background histories of offenders that come in to apply for employment [with the Navajo Nation].”

Yazzie said his office had previously researched a known sex offender in several different agencies, but the individual’s name did not surface in some of the reporting systems, only a select few.

Delegate Shepherd suggested that proposed criminal background checks be reviewed by legislative counsel to determine whether it can be added as an amendment to the legislation, or go through separate legislation, or if it is an administrative fix that can be added to the Navajo Nation employment application by the Department of Personnel Management.

“We want this to make this a holistic attempt going forward to make this law as solid as we can,” said Delegate Shepherd. “This [law] protects all Navajo individuals especially young kids at the schools and in their own homes.”

LOC members voted 4-0 to approve Legislation No. 0101-14.

In addition, the LOC considered Legislation No. 0106-14, which seeks to authorize a referendum on the proposed term limits for Council Delegate’s to serve a maximum of two terms, or eight years, within their lifetime. LOC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0106-14.

Lastly, LOC members considered Legislation No. 0107-14, which also seeks to authorize a referendum on the proposed term limits for the Navajo Nation President to serve a maximum of two terms, or eight years, within their lifetime. LOC members voted 2-0 to pass Legislation No. 0107-14.

The legislations now move forward to the Naabik’iyát’ Committee for consideration. Council serves as the final authority for the three legislations.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 1, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Resources and Development Committee tables legislation to rescind Uranium Resources Inc.'s right-of-way in Churchrock**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Tuesday, following nearly two hours of debate, the Resources and Development Committee tabled Legislation No. 0104-14, which is aimed to rescind RDCD-69-13, a resolution that grants Uranium Resources Inc. a right-of-way to properties in Churchrock, N.M.

The resolution was previously passed by the RDC on Dec. 24, 2013, which would allow URI to conduct an in-situ uranium recovery project in the Churchrock Chapter and authorized the establishment of a subcommittee to work with the Natural Resources Division, the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, and URI representatives to draft the terms of an agreement that results in mutual gains for the Navajo Nation and URI.

“I bring this legislation before you because there is two existing laws that we really did not look at. It is really conflicting and I think that there is a way to do this correctly if it is going to be done,” stated legislation sponsor Council Delegate George Apachito (Alamo, Ramah, Tohajiilee).

The legislation states “portions of the Resolution No. 0373-13 conflict with the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005, The Radioactive Materials Transportation Act of 2012, and the Temporary Access Agreement dated July 19, 2013, between the Navajo Nation and HRI.”

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) urged committee members not to support the legislation.

“I do ask that you withdraw it. We have a 20% chance of winning this fight. What are you going to do if you lose jurisdiction? When we lose jurisdiction, we are going to be on the sideline. We won’t be able to object anymore,” stated Delegate Tsosie.

According to the legislation, in 1929, there was a deed between the Sante Fe Railroad and the United States Government that includes 42,000 acres of land in trust. URI has argued that the deed allows the company a right-of-way, to access uranium resources.

Navajo Nation Department of Justice attorney, David Taylor, supported the legislation to rescind, and said the issue is a complicated situation.

“The Navajo Nation Department of Justice supports this legislation. The legislation proposed by Delegate Apachito is fundamentally consistent with existing Navajo laws,” stated Taylor.

Another supporter of the legislation was Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who represents the community of Churchrock.

“I very much support this legislation. Think of the future. If this goes through, it is the kids that I am thinking of. What is going to happen to them? Why can't URI understand that the Council already said 'no' to uranium. It is the greed,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) recommended the legislation be tabled until the next meeting between the RDC subcommittee and URI.

RDC members tabled Legislation No. 0104-14 with a vote of 3-2.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 1, 2014

## President Shelly finalizes horse MOU with Gov. Richardson



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson have both initialed off on a memorandum of understanding for the free roaming horses on the Navajo Nation. Richardson and his Foundation to Protect New Mexico Wildlife will assist the Nation with the horses and provide humane treatment and resources for their protection. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK — Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly announced the agreement between the Navajo Nation and the Foundation to Protect New Mexico Wildlife has been completed.

President Shelly negotiated the terms of the agreement with former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who is also co-founder of the Foundation.

“Working together to resolve challenges is our approach as we work with Governor Richardson and his Foundation. They will give us funding and find more resources to reverse the population of feral horses,” President Shelly said. “We will continue

to treat these animals humanely and implement the best solutions to our rangeland issues.”

We thank Governor Richardson and the Foundation for working with the Navajo Nation in this most important effort, he added.

He initialed off on the memorandum of understanding with Gov. Richardson and the Foundation on April 30, 2014.

The agreement between the parties came after months of negotiations and discussions on the language of the agreement.

Gov. Richardson said, “This historic agreement is a great first step in our

efforts to not only protect these horses, but to find humane and long-term solutions that are in the best interest of the Navajo people and their land.”

“I commend President Shelly for his commitment to this issue, and we look forward to getting right to work,” he added.

According to the MOU, the foundation agrees to fundraise and secure resources for the Navajo Nation to use for the successful implementation of the management program.

This will involve working with the federal government, states, conservation groups, private parties, and foundations to identify resources for adoptions, triages, veterinarian services, and sanctuaries.

The Navajo Nation agrees to make reasonable efforts to work with buyers offering humane alternatives to the transportation of horses to slaughter facilities and sales to buyers transporting horses to slaughter facilities.

The Nation will also work with the Foundation to secure resources for the implementation of the program.

The term of the MOU

is one year from the date of execution, which will be announced early summer 2014.

Plans are to have a signing ceremony in Window Rock with Gov. Richardson and Robert Redford. Redford is currently filming a movie and will not be available for the signing until early summer.

“Horses are sacred to the Navajo people. We have songs, prayers and ceremonies that are performed in their honor,” President Shelly said. “We will have a medicine man available during the signing to share our cultural perspective and relationship with horses.”

-30-

