



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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CONTACT: GEORGE HARDEEN
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
OFFICE – 928-871-7917
CELL – 928-309-8532
pressoffice@opvp.org

Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., vetoes legislation citing need for local representation on Eastern Land Commission

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., today vetoed legislation to amend the Eastern Land Commission plan of operation, citing the need for local representation on the Commission.

“I strongly believe that the important function of the Commission should be carried out by local representatives as opposed to Council delegates,” President Shirley said. “A Commission made up of local or chapter officials from the areas identified in the legislation would be more in line with the intent and purpose of the Local Governance Act.”

He said having local people on the Commission “would be an opportunity to engage local participation.”

In his veto message to Navajo Nation Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan, the President also noted that while several provisions of the legislation addressed important functions related to Eastern Agency land issues, the legislation – CAP-11-08 – would allow the Commission to assume responsibilities reserved to the President on land and energy issues.

He said the proposed amendments could also conflict with the authority of the Navajo Nation Intergovernmental Relations Committee, Transportation and Community Development Committee, and Resources Committee.

The President noted in his message that the proposed amendments are broad but unclear about what the

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– Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr.

specific function of the Commission would be with the amended plan of operation.

“There is reference made to addressing land issues in the Eastern Agency, but there is also reference made to the Commission undertaking administrative matters,” he said. “It appears that this Commission would serve legislative-related and executive-related functions, even though it is established under the Legislative Branch.”

The President said the legislation provides no way to measure outcomes and performance results of the Commission.

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