



The Navajo Nation Council - Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President and Speaker of the Navajo Nation agree to work together on government reform

Agreement stipulates weekly meetings between two branches

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — In an effort to resolve differences using the Navajo concept of K'e, the Honorable Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan and Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr. announced a plan to comprehensively reform the Navajo government together.

In a press conference Wednesday, the two Navajo leaders told media reporters and visitors their plans, which will eventually have a convention convened where changes to Title 2 laws will be considered. A comprehensive government reform document is expected to be drafted and will eventually have Navajo voters consider the final plan at the ballot. President Shirley said the document hasn't taken an official name but could be considered a constitution or a charter.



The president commended the help of Speaker Morgan, Council Delegates Raymond Maxx and Leonard Tsosie for taking the initiative to bring the two leaders together to hammer out details of a plan for the Navajo people.

From right, the Honorable Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan and Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr. answer questions from reporters on a new agreement the two parties signed to discuss a comprehensive government reform document together. The two Navajo leaders announced their intentions at a press conference Wednesday at Quality Inn in Window Rock, Ariz. (Photo by Bronson Peshlakai)

"My focus as the leader of the Navajo Nation Council has been to ensure through representation for our Navajo," Speaker Morgan said. "I support the spirit of comprehensive government reform in an effort to address structural concerns and issues that hinder the work of our nation."

The memorandum of agreement signed between both Speaker Morgan and President Shirley calls for both parties or their designees to meet to discuss procedures and processes on how to begin discussion on government reform. Five members will be appointed by the president and five members will be appointed by the speaker.

"You will see me standing with the Navajo Nation Council in their effort to address issues of comprehensive government reform," Speaker Morgan said.

Once the parties finalizes a document on government reform, the Council will consider the legislation. If the Council passes the government reform document, the Navajo people will get a chance to vote the government reform document into law.

According to the memorandum of understanding new legislation will be drafted for the Council's consideration to require amendments to the section in question, 2 NNC Section 102(A) be only a majority of those voters in an election when at least 35 percent of the electorate votes to change the size of the Council and reducing the size of the Council to 40 members.

The MOU also states \$2 million would be appropriated to pay for activities related to of government reform, such as mileage reimbursement, lodging and other incidental travel expenses incurred by participants.

President Shirley announced that his office has secured about 10,000 signatures on his petition drive to reduce the Council to 24 delegates. He said he will still move forward in collecting the more than 16,800 signatures needed to place on a special election. According to the MOU, if the Council fails to pass the new government reform document, the MOU becomes nullified.

The next step is for representatives from the executive and legislative branches to begin meeting once a week for at least two hours to begin discussing ways and procedures to begin a historic step to government reform.

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