



The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Navajo Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie works diligently toward construction of clinic in Thoreau, N.M.

"It's been a tedious process, but we are making headway. We really want to see construction set before the winter sets in." — Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie has been working diligently since 2007 to have a health and dental clinic constructed in the community of Thoreau, N.M., and his project continues to make steady progress forward.

Yazzie (Thoreau) appeared before the Health and Social Services Committee of the 21st Navajo Nation Council last week to give a courtesy update to the committee, which has put their full support behind the proposed health facility. A report was also given by a representative from the Indian Health Service who briefed the committee on the steps being taken to ensure construction of the clinic. Yazzie has been working on getting the health and dental clinic built since he was elected as a Council delegate.

"The people within my community have to travel as far as Crownpoint, Gallup and even Acoma for medical services," said Yazzie.

Yazzie began working on finalizing a land transfer of nearly four acres from the Navajo Nation to Indian Health Services. The transfer was lengthy; it required communication and correspondence from various entities including the Crownpoint Indian Health Services, the Navajo Department of Justice and the Intergovernmental Relations Committee (IGR) of the Navajo Nation Council. When it went before the IGR Committee about a year and a half ago, the resolution passed unanimously.

The Indian Health Service also reported they do have funding sources readily available to utilize towards the construction of the clinic, including two sources of New Mexico state funding, Medicaid and Medicare funding, and Navajo Nation Abandoned Land Mines Grant money, among others.

Officials with the Indian Health Service expect to meet with their legal counsel at the months end to review various documents that will help move the project forward. The clinic would be located in Thoreau about a mile from Interstate 40 northeast along State Road 371.

"Right now, we're just waiting for the Indian Health Service on construction start-up," Yazzie said. "We've done our part; our community and surrounding communities have gone forth with the signature—it was a lot of work."

"We worked hard and we got this land withdrawal approved through IGR," added Yazzie.

At a Health and Social Service Committee meeting, a representative from Indian Health Service reported to the committee that the attorney has the paperwork and it is in the process of being finalized.

"This is work that was being done by past chapter officials," he said. "I'm just helping to finalize it and ensure that it goes through the proper protocols to eventually become constructed. It's been a tedious process, but we are making headway. We really want to see construction set before the winter sets in."

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