



## The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Navajo Nation Council completes day two of 2009 Summer Session

### ***Council elevates Navajo Department of Transportation to a division, Navajo Green Jobs established***

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The 21<sup>st</sup> Navajo Nation Council convened for day two of their 2009 Summer Session today passing historic legislation and overriding a veto by Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley Jr. at the Navajo Nation Council chamber.

The session began with the deletion of Legislation No. 0375-09, sponsored by Raymond Joe (Tachee/Blue Gap/Whippoorwill). This legislation was deleted to allow the sponsor and the Council time to rework the legislation and return it back to the agenda for the 2009 Fall Session. This legislation was related to an emergency to enact the Judicial Branch Leadership Act and to establish the Navajo Nation District Court Judges and Supreme Court Justices as elected positions within the Navajo Nation.

In old business, Legislation 0565-08, sponsored by Jonathan Nez (Shonto), was recalled by Amos F. Johnson (Forest Lake) for reconsideration by the Council by a vote of 70-0. This legislation, the Navajo Community Development Financial Institute, was tabled by a vote of 41-33 on Jan. 27 and the Council asked for clarification on the shareholders involved.

This legislation is related to community development, economic development and finance to ratify to the creation of the Navajo Community Development Financial Institution Inc. as a for-profit corporation wholly owned by the Navajo Nation.

In his presentation to the Council, sponsor Jonathan Nez explained, "This legislation would help diversify and bring funds for projects we have at the chapter level."

Still, several Council members had questions regarding the shareholders of the institution, mainly the mentioning of the Budget and Finance Committee designated as the shareholders.

In response, Nez made a recommendation to possibly have two members from the Economic Development Committee, the Transportation and Community Development Committee, Government Services Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee – all committees that have direct interest in the institution. Another suggestion was to have one member from all the eleven standing committees as shareholders.

At the end, the legislation failed to garner the 59 votes needed to pass, it failed 37-21.

In other Council action under old business, Legislation No. 0179-09, sponsored by Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan passed by a vote of 62-1. This legislation was on the agenda as an emergency item to enact the Navajo Green Commission Act of 2009. This item was tabled during the 2009 Spring Session on April 22 in order to conduct a work session held on May 8.

In new business, Legislation No. 0356-09, sponsored by Young Jeff Tom (Mariano Lake/Smith Lake) was on the agenda as an emergency to override a veto by Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley Jr. It took two attempts by the Council to override the veto. The first attempt garnered a vote of 55-19 and needed 59 votes or more to pass. Later, a second attempt recalled by Council Delegate Ervin Keeswood Sr. (Tse Daa Kaan) was successful with a vote of 63-16.

Next, Legislation No. 0201-09, sponsored by Harold Wauneka (Fort Defiance) failed 41-36. This legislation was related to judiciary to amend the composition of the Judicial Conduct Commission and establish applicable laws at 7 N.N.C. §§ 423-425.

In other business, Legislation No. 0315-09, sponsored by Orlanda Smith-Hodge (Cornfields/Greasewood Springs/Klegetoh/Wide Ruins) was tabled until the 2009 Fall Session. This legislation proposed the enactment of the Standing Committee Video/Teleconferencing Meeting Act of 2009.

Legislation No. 0294-09, sponsored by Leslie Dele (Tonalea) passed by a vote of 69-1. The legislation was presented to establish the Navajo Nation Division of Transportation. The creation of the new division was strongly supported by Arbin Mitchell, director for the Navajo Division of Community Development.

Day three of the Summer Session will convene tomorrow, July 22.

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