



## The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Navajo Nation Council makes history, becomes first Nation in Indian Country to initiate Green Jobs

*“Once again, the Navajo Nation Council has taken the lead in Indian Country and has displayed a leadership role in paving the way for other Nations and tribes to begin their own initiatives. It’s a good day in Indian Country.”*

*— Navajo Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan*

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Nation Council made history today by becoming the first Nation in Indian Country to pass legislation promoting green jobs. In a 62-1 vote, the Navajo Council passed the Navajo Green Commission Act that will establish Green Jobs across its sprawling 27,000 square-mile reservation

Legislation No. 0179-09 was sponsored by Navajo Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan. On April 22, the legislation was tabled during the Council’s Spring Session to allow more time to educate the Council members about the commission, with a then directive to create an Energy Policy by the Navajo Division of Natural Resources.

In a presentation to the Council, Speaker Morgan urged his colleagues to support the legislation which will have great positive impacts on the Navajo people and the Navajo Nation.

For months, the Office of the Speaker and the Navajo Green Jobs Coalition worked intensely to educate the Council and the general public about this Act.

“I am ecstatic about the passage of this legislation. It is vitally important that we as Navajo people, as Native American people and people in general, continue protecting our Mother Earth and all her precious resources,” Speaker Morgan said. “The intent of this legislation is not a foreign concept to us. Our livelihood as Navajo people



The Navajo Nation Council passed the Navajo Green Commission Act July 21, 2009, in Window Rock, Ariz. Top photo: Supporters of Green Jobs erupt in applause immediately after the passage of the Act. Bottom photo, left to right: legislation co-sponsor Amos Johnson, Green Jobs member Tony Skrelunas and Navajo Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan



has always depended upon the unique relationship we have with the land and these same concepts are reflected in this legislation—it is surely a reflection of our core values as Navajo people.”

Speaker Morgan explained, “Once the commission is in operation, the plan will be to create and support small-scale green economic development projects at our local chapter levels within the vast Navajo Nation. We are now able to help chapters and the local community members plan and build local green projects that will eventually create jobs and provide valuable services to the Nation.”

The commission will help to coordinate long-term green economic planning with existing tribal departments and divisions, and to seek and secure state, federal and private funding for its operations and various projects.

“Navajo Green Jobs is good for the Navajo Nation and it is good for Mother Earth,” Speaker Morgan added. “It was refreshing to hear the passion and excitement of our Council. I am pleased to report that the Navajo Nation now joins the world effort to go green! The Navajo Nation will no longer take a back seat in addressing issues hurting our environment; we have proactively taken positive action to address the well-being of our Mother Earth.”

Still to be considered is Legislation 0180-09, which is the Navajo Green Economy Fund, which will create an account for money that is secured for green projects through various private, state and federal grants.

Speaker Morgan thanked his staff at the Office of the Speaker and the Navajo Green Jobs Economy Coalition for their efforts to push this legislation forward.

“Once again, the Navajo Nation Council has taken the lead in Indian Country and has displayed a leadership role in paving the way for other Nations and tribes to begin their own initiatives,” he added. “It’s a good day in Indian Country.”



Supporter of Navajo Green Jobs hold a press conference outside the Navajo Council chambers immediately after its passage April 21, 2009, in Window Rock, Ariz. Dr. James Davis Jr., chief of staff for the Office of the Speaker, answers questions from the press. (Photos by Joshua Lavar Butler)

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