



The Navajo Nation Council - Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Speaker Morgan responds to President Shirley's continued attacks

Speaker accused of taking President's intentionally facetious comments literally

"Facetious? Are we to assume that all statements coming out of the President's Office are facetious? How are we supposed to take the President's statements seriously — especially the Navajo people — when erroneous statements are officially issued from his office and passed off as facetious statements?" — Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Speaker's Office responds to misrepresentations and to continued attacks being disseminated by President Joe Shirley Jr.'s office about the Presidential Task Force on Government Reform.

In a June 9 [news release](#), the President's Office criticizes Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan's comments about the president's two initiatives.

Speaker Morgan responded to a comment by the President in a Gallup Independent news article dated May 28 — which the President's press officer labels as facetious — in which he stated that the Navajo Council has "subcommittees within subcommittees."

The President's press officer stated that Speaker Morgan is "taking the President's intentionally facetious comments literally."

Speaker Morgan responded and said that standing committees do not have subcommittees within subcommittees as the President assumes.

"Facetious? Are we to assume that all statements coming out of the President's Office are facetious?" Speaker Morgan asked. "How are we supposed to take the President's statements seriously — especially the Navajo people — when erroneous statements are officially issued from his office and passed off as facetious statements?"

The Navajo people should question whether the President's statements — written by his press officer — are all facetious?

Speaker Morgan sends his appreciation to the President for the helpful list that the press officer provided in his news release. The list compiled all the committees of the Navajo Nation Council and he said, "I'm glad that the President recognizes the committees that the council delegates work with. They do all this work and the President should have a better appreciation of what the Council does."

The President's press officer continues to make reference to research published by the Navajo Government Development Office — which is under the Legislative Branch of the Navajo Nation — to use as a launching pad for his propaganda.

The Navajo people need to know that this Navajo Government Development study was actually instigated by Speaker Morgan to be used as an instrument to improve government services within the Legislative Branch of the Navajo Nation, not to be used by the President's Office to attack the Navajo Council.

Speaker Morgan said that the Navajo people should encourage the President and his office to initiate a study on the Executive Branch.

"We're open with this information of the Legislative Branch," Speaker Morgan said. "Maybe a similar study should be conducted on the efficiency of the Executive Branch as well — it can be an easy process to initiate and I am sure that many people would be interested."

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The President's press officer claims that "in fact, no executive order to that effect exists."

The evidence is in black and white, and it was even mentioned by President Shirley during his State of the Nation Address to the Council on April 21.

The President said, "As President of the Navajo Nation, I will issue Executive Order 02-2008, to prohibit Executive Branch employees from seeking supplemental appropriations..."

Several division directors that work under the President's Office have expressed their frustration in an executive order that discourages them from lobbying council delegates for funding. Division directors hesitate to voice their concerns, in fear of retaliation from the President's Office.

President Shirley said that "when divisions seek supplemental appropriations, council delegates use the opportunity to add millions of dollars of unrelated funding to the appropriation request as 'riders.'"

Speaker Morgan explained that the Council has consistently overrode President Shirley's vetoes in order to deliver much-needed funds to the Navajo people — overrides that benefited executive branch operations.

Speaker Morgan questions if President Shirley is criticizing his own Navajo people for receiving desperately needed funds.

The President's press release states that, "a 2005 study commissioned by the Legislative Branch Effectiveness Subcommittee titled, *Final Report to the Navajo Nation Council Subcommittee on Legislative Effectiveness*, found that over the six-year period studied the Legislative Branch intruded into Executive Branch functions."

"The Legislative Branch would not need to intrude if the President would just do his job," Speaker Morgan said. "The Council often finds itself in a position of doing the President's work, because divisions are not receiving the attention that they need. We as tribal leaders have a commitment to provide quality direct services to our Navajo people — that's paramount."

The President claims that the Council's practice of appropriating money directly to chapters without plans for its use causes problems, but the Council is simply responding to the needs of the Navajo people.

The Navajo Chapters would not be in need if the executive branch would just budget for the year appropriately and the Council would not need to respond to the cries of the chapters around the Navajo Nation. The appropriations by the Council are in response to the local needs, which the President fails to identify.

The Speaker stands by his statement that the President is dividing the Navajo Nation with his continued attacks of the Navajo Nation Council through various media outlets. Attacks to the Council are not helping his cause — it is actually having a negative effect on his two initiatives.

The President's press officer references a local newspaper online poll as indicators that support for the President's two initiatives are quickly increasing and gaining widespread support.

It would be ridiculous to consider this online poll as fact, because this polling data has no scientific methodology. Polling data researchers will agree that polls must be conducted properly to create valid information. The President's press officer is mistakenly considering this poll as fact and therefore is in violation of not presenting factual data to the Navajo people.

A well-conducted scientific poll should provide a reliable guide to the opinions of people. This poll that is referenced by the President's office fails to answer questions like: Who did the poll? Who paid for the poll and why was it done? How many people were interviewed for the survey? How were those people chosen? What area: nation, state, or origin or what group were these people chosen from? How were the interviews conducted? What is the sampling error for the poll results? What kinds of mistakes can skew poll results? What questions were asked? and is this poll worth reporting?

These are questions that are commonly asked for data collection, but the poll that the President's Office references failed to accomplish any of these factors. This is another example of how misinformation is being fabricated to push their issue forward.

The poll cannot be passed off as facts as the President's press officer has done. Polls should be done in accordance of scientific methodology, so that information can be generated as fact. It is foolish for the President's press officer to pass these off as facts.

Aside from President Shirley's continued attacks to the Council by his press officer, Speaker Morgan and the 21st Navajo Nation Council will continue to work on behalf of the Navajo people.