



The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr. put on administrative leave to allow further investigations into OnSat, BCDS

Administrative leave will allow appropriate law enforcement authorities access to further information within the Office of the President/Vice President

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — By a vote of 48-22, the Navajo Nation Council put President Joe Shirley Jr. on administrative leave with pay during the pendency of investigations and possible prosecution of ethical, civil and criminal charges by the Navajo Nation through a special prosecutor. The Council's actions today, Oct. 26, are the result of three investigations that allege wrongdoing by the president and key members of his staff within the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation.

On Oct. 19, the Council received reports on the investigations performed by law firms contracted by the Office of the Attorney General relative to the Navajo Nation dealings with the private companies, OnSat and BCDS, which provide reasonable grounds that certain Navajo Nation officials and employees may have seriously breached their fiduciary trust to the Navajo people.

President Shirley's placement on leave will allow appropriate law enforcement authorities access to further information within the Office of the President/Vice President and prevent the office from obstructing or otherwise interfering with the investigation and possible prosecution from the allegations set forth in the investigative reports.

With the passage of Legislation No. 0617-09, sponsored by Raymond Joe, the OnSat and BCDS investigative reports will now be referred to the Office of the Navajo Attorney General for application to the Special Division of the Window Rock District Court to hire a special prosecutor.

The Council's actions today were pursuant to Navajo Nation Code, 11 N.N.C. § 240 (C), which states, "The Navajo Nation Council may by majority vote of the Council, place the President, Vice-President or any of its members on administrative leave, with or without pay, where there are reasonable grounds to believe that such official has seriously breached his or her fiduciary trust to the Navajo people and such leave will serve the best interests of the Navajo people."

An earlier form of the legislation included the removal of the Vice President of the Navajo Nation, but an amendment was made to exclude him from this process by a vote of 58-10, since the three reports did not mention his name.

The Council is urging the public to respect the process and allow the investigations to run its full course in a proper fashion.

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