



Contact: Karen Francis, *Judicial Liaison Officer*
Administrative Office of the Courts
JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE NAVAJO NATION
Office: 928-871-7018
Facsimile: 928-871-6761
E-mail: karenfrancis@navajo-nsn.gov
<http://www.navajocourts.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: Friday, January 27, 2012

**MARTIN AVERY CONFIRMED TO NAVAJO GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

WINDOW ROCK –The Navajo Nation Council confirmed the two-year appointment of Martin Avery to the Commission on Navajo Government Development on Thursday, January 26, 2012.

There are now eight members on the Commission with the confirmations of Mr. Avery and the president's nominee Heather Clah during the Council's Winter Session, according to Caleb Roanhorse, Acting Executive Director of the Office of Navajo Government Development. Per 2 N.N.C. § 974, meetings of the Commission require a quorum of seven members.

Chief Justice Herb Yazzie nominated Mr. Avery to the commission. The legislation to confirm was sponsored by Delegate Elmer P. Begay.

Mr. Avery is Kin'ichii'nii born for Tó'aheedlínii and is from the community of Coyote Canyon. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Fort Lewis College and a Juris Doctorate from the University Of New Mexico School Of Law.

Mr. Avery is currently the staff attorney at the Ramah District Court of the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch. He has also worked as a public defender for the Pueblo of Laguna, general counsel for Navajo Housing Authority, the executive director of the Navajo Nation Washington Office, a staff attorney for the Navajo Nation Office of the Chief Prosecutor, assistant district attorney for McKinley County, and a staff attorney and tribal court advocate at the Navajo Nation Department of Justice.

He has been a member of the Navajo Nation Bar Association since 1995 and the New Mexico State Bar Association since 1993. He has served as a board member of the DNA-People's Legal Services and is a current board member of the Indian Law Resource Center in Helena, Mont.

The composition of the commission represents a cross-section of the Navajo public. The Judicial Branch appointee is not to exclusively represent the branch but to represent the interests of the Navajo Nation and the People from the perspective of a person learned in American law and

Navajo law, with knowledge of the views of government from the legal community and from the local people through experience with the courts and peacemaking.

Per 2 N.N.C. § 972, the Commission on Navajo Government Development consists of 12 members confirmed by and serving at the pleasure of the Navajo Nation Council, including members nominated from each of the branches of government, each of the five agencies of the Navajo Nation, Diné College, the Education Committee (now the Health, Education and Human Services Committee) and Commission on Navajo Women. One member is also nominated by the director of the Office of Navajo Government Development. The Judicial Branch nominee must be a licensed attorney and a member of the Navajo Nation Bar Association.

Per 2 N.N.C. § 973, part of the powers of the Commission are to develop recommendations and proposals for alternative forms of chapter government, provide short and long range comprehensive planning, evaluation and development to enhance the Navajo government at both the central and local levels, and to review, evaluate and recommend laws, rules and regulations to develop a comprehensive system of government for the Navajo people.

###