



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
August 12, 2013

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Naabik'íyátí Committee approves  
amending Absentee Voting by Rules and Regulations**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Naabik'íyátí Committee on Thursday approved Legislation No. 0166-13, which seeks to amend Title 11 of the Navajo Nation Code to authorize the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors to implement absentee voting by rules and regulations.

“What we are trying to do is separate the procedural process from Title 11 by adding them to our current rules and regulations and allowing our office to manage them,” said Navajo Election Administration director Edison Wauneka.

Wauneka explained that allowing the election supervisors to oversee the rules and regulations would streamline the process of absentee voting.

“I want to clarify that we are not getting rid of absentee voting,” said Wauneka.

Committee members requested further clarification from Wauneka in regards to the proposed changes in the absentee voting rules and regulations.

“In the [absentee voting] policy and procedures, what exactly does the Election Board want to change?” asked Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill).

“We are requesting the authority to amend the policy through our Board to make the absentee voting process more efficient,” said Wauneka, while noting that currently changes made to the policy requires approval by the Navajo Nation Council.

Wauneka said that any changes made to the rules and regulations are to ensure that Navajo voters can exercise their right to vote if they are unable to be present at their designated polling site.

“If the rules and regulations in absentee voting does not accommodate our voters and prevents them from exercising their right to vote, the Board can make proper amendments to remedy any issues,” said Wauneka.

Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) cautioned the Election Board to protect against voters attempting to vote more than once.

“We need to make sure that those who choose to submit absentee voting ballots do not also vote in person at the polls,” said Delegate Begaye.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Wauneka acknowledged the committee’s concerns and stated that the election supervisors will do everything in their power to uphold the integrity of the absentee voting rules and regulations, while protecting the rights of Navajo voters.

The Naabik’iyátí Committee voted 12-0 to approve Legislation No. 0166-13. The legislation now goes to Council for final consideration.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)