



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603
Jolene Holgate | 928.871.7160
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Speaker Naize responds to President Shelly's veto of Title II amendments

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President issued a press release addressing President Ben Shelly's veto of resolution CJY 28-13, approved by the Navajo Nation Council during the summer session.

Legislation No. 0381-12, sponsored by Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) sought to strikeout language at 2 N.N.C. §183, which currently restricts stipend payments for work sessions, workshops, and training and business meetings with Navajo or non-Navajo entities.

"The changes to Title II are directed at increasing Council attendance at work session meetings and does not increase Council stipends, as indicated by President Shelly's comments," said Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood).

In a memo addressed to Speaker Naize dated July 29, President Shelly states that the legislation "will provide a salary raise for the council delegates."

"For delegates to receive a salary raise it would not only require an increase to the legislative budget, but also two-thirds approval of all Navajo Nation Chapters as mandated in Title II of the Navajo Nation Code — that is not what this legislation does," Speaker Naize said.

Speaker Naize further explained that the proposed change is in response to increased requests for a reduced Council to attend numerous meetings, which often makes it difficult for delegates to prioritize their schedules.

"Departments and programs compete for time to conduct work sessions with delegates that often last beyond an eight-hour work day, resulting in certain issues receiving inadequate attention," stated Speaker Naize. "This legislation provides an incentive to attend meetings with programs to address issues that directly impact Diné people, but does not increase salary for delegates."

Speaker Naize also addressed statements from President Shelly in which he says that a "pay increase" for delegates cannot be justified in a time when all the Nation's programs are anticipating budget cuts.

"I remain mindful of ongoing budget cutbacks due to the federal sequester. However, I assure everyone that if this legislation were implemented, it would not increase or affect the legislative budget, nor that of any other program or department within the Navajo Nation," added Speaker Naize.

The Council can override President Shelly's veto with two-thirds of Council's approval.

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