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Law and Order Committee Chair expresses appreciation and public safety concerns at the grand opening of judicial facilities in Crownpoint

CROWNPOINT, NM – The grand opening celebration of the Crownpoint Judicial Complex on Mar. 8, Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), chair of the Law and Order Committee, spoke before a crowd of approximately 200 people, recognizing and thanking the many people who worked together to fund and construct the Navajo Nation’s new multi-purpose judicial facilities.

The new buildings are designed to house law enforcement, judicial courts, peacemaking activities, and approximately 50 beds for adult and juvenile detention facilities.

Delegate Yazzie attributed the successful development to the “collaboration” of many departments, law enforcement representatives, past and current council delegates, and construction workers.

“It was a real team effort,” said Delegate Yazzie. “Everybody took part in the process, and this will make our communities safer.”

Delegate Yazzie expressed gratitude to members of the previous 21st Navajo Nation Council’s Judicial Committee and Public Safety Committee, which legislated the establishment of a one percent sales tax increase on the Nation. This action is what created a funding source to pay for the construction of new Navajo judicial and public safety facilities.

Although this is a major accomplishment, Delegate Yazzie acknowledged the presence of other public safety concerns that still impact the Nation.

Among the concerns cited were the need for more police and the need to create a 911 call center that could expediently respond to calls from Crownpoint and surrounding areas.

When Crownpoint residents call 911 for emergency assistance, their calls are directed to personnel in Gallup who then relay the information back to emergency personnel in Crownpoint, resulting in significant delays in emergency response time.

This inefficiency leaves those who are in need of emergency services waiting for longer periods of time, and that time is very critical, said Delegate Yazzie.

“These are a few of the major problems that I urge all of us to work to resolve for our Navajo people,” said Delegate Yazzie.

Law and Order Committee members Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) and Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K’ai’Bii’To, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) were also in attendance at the grand opening ceremony.

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