



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
April 10, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nrib.communications@gmail.com

**Health, Education, and Human Services Committee supports funding efforts for the construction of a new Gallup Indian Medical Center**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Wednesday, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee approved Legislation 0082-13, supporting the funding for the construction of a new Gallup Indian Medical Center by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Services.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) said the overall goal of the legislation is to bring all entities together to begin securing funds.

“I just ask the committee [for] their support on this, so I can get everybody to the table and start talking. I am open to directives. I want everybody to have their input,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

Built in the 1950’s, Gallup Indian Medical Center is located in Gallup, N.M. and is one of the largest IHS facilities in the country.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) proposed an amendment to change language to distinguish between out-patient and in-patient facilities, in accordance to the Navajo Nation priority listing.

“It is basically giving the authority to [President Ben Shelly] and myself, to advocate for new construction dollars, as it relates to new in-patient facilities in accordance with the Navajo Nation priority listing,” stated Delegate Hale.

Out-patient clinics are facilities used for diagnosis or treatment. In-patient facilities are hospitals that house patients who are admitted.

The amendment passed with a vote of 3-0.

Jenny Notah with the IHS Navajo Area Office, stated that GIMC is one of three projects on the in-patient listing for the IHS facility construction priority list.

The Healthcare Facilities Construction Priority System (HFCPS), which is under the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act, is a system that IHS uses to identify the need for IHS and

tribal healthcare facilities. It was first established in 1991 by Congress, to direct IHS in providing a priority list for facility construction projects.

“Indian Health Services has participated in a number of discussions regarding this project and have been planning for a number of years. The communities are very anxious, as well as the patients, and they are looking forward to having that facility,” stated Notah.

Delegate Yazzie stated that he is thankful for the hospitals in Crownpoint, Gallup, and Fort Defiance but the gradual “wear and tear” of the current building is evident.

“It is going to take teamwork from everyone. We have committees and departments that have presented but it is time we stop talking and actually go to work. We need to finalize a solid plan,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

The HEHSC approved Legislation No. 0082-13 with a vote of 3-0.

###

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