



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approves legislation regarding Corrective Action Plan for Department of Workforce Development

ALAMO, N.M. – Last Wednesday, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee approved Legislation No. 0032-14 regarding the follow-up of Navajo Department of Workforce Development Corrective Action Plan implementation and imposing sanctions against the department manager for failure to implement the CAP.

NDWD provides two types of services called comprehensive and supplemental programs to assist adults, dislocated workers and youth that reside within the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Nation Office of the Auditor General conducted a follow-up review of the NDWD corrective action plan (CAP) to determine whether NDWD implemented the CAP to resolve findings outlined in an audit report which found that the financial and management control systems remain weak and operational deficiencies did not meet its mandates.

The original CAP was approved by the Budget and Finance Committee in Feb. 2009.

“Overall, the corrective measures within the CAP were not implemented by NDWD. Therefore, the deficiencies presented in the initial audit report still exist. NDWD Program Manager could not provide evidence of ensuring staff adherence with program guidelines,” stated Auditor General Elizabeth Begay.

“I am aware Alamo School Board is one of the grantees that received Workforce Investment Acts monies. Since our grant fund has been in place since 2010, we comply with funding paperwork and our funding allocations have been extended based on our grant plan,” stated Roselyn Shirley, Department Manager of Navajo Department of Workforce Development.

The Office of the Auditor General reviewed activities covering a sixth-month period beginning October 1, 2012 through March 21, 2013.

“They had three years to correct the deficiencies and we found out on our follow-up review that they failed. They had a timeline to implement these measures so that they can improve their operation. Their deficiencies still remained,” stated Begay.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) suggested a directive to create a Task Force Group to assist with the Corrective Action Plan.

“The value of a task group would be that it will provide the program with a preventative measure to strengthen and help make the program strong. So it can serve our children, and our people that are trying to make use of the program,” stated Delegate Phelps.

According to the follow-up review, NDWD was unable to meet its 20-business day goal for processing payments to students in a timely manner. Students were left without funds at the start of their training and in the initial audit, 94 student files were reviewed and revealed that students did not receive their financial assistance until 40-60 days after the Authorization for Payment was submitted.

“When a program does not meet the needs of individuals then what good is the government? What good are those people that serve in those positions?” asked Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) who sponsored the legislation.

Also included in the follow-up review results are sanctions against the Department and Department Manager for failure to comply with the CAP.

“There are system problems we acknowledge. We understand that the delegates’ concern and constituency bringing forth their concerns. But, I think if we work together, we can solve the problem. Looking for solutions is very critical at this time. This can be improved,” stated Thomas Ranger, Division Director for the Division of Human Resources.

HEHSC members approved the legislation with a vote of 3-0, which included a directive to implement a Task Force group.

Legislation No. 0032-14 now goes to the BFC for final consideration.

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