



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 21, 2014

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Law and Order Committee receives report regarding the elimination of the Equivalency Clause

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received a report regarding the recent elimination of the Equivalency Clause and the status of its implementation by the Navajo Nation Division of Human Resources and Navajo Nation Department of Personnel Management.

In 2013, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee passed a resolution amending the Navajo Nation Personnel Policy and Procedures by eliminating the Equivalency Clause to establish “minimum” and “preferred” qualifications for all positions.

The HEHSC was the final authority for the legislation.

“Because of the amendment, we realized it has been difficult to understand and implement,” said Human Resources director Bernadette Bernally. “Not every position requires a college degree, so it is not realistic to put college degrees in all employment positions.”

According to Bernally’s report, the amendment was implemented last October and since then all departments have been asked to submit a two-page Position Classification Questionnaire form to explain the minimum education and experience needed for each position. However, Bernally said that not all departments have responded, adding to the setbacks.

LOC member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) said the amendments were intended to address concerns over recent college graduates who are unable to obtain employment on the Navajo Nation due to being overqualified or lacking experience.

Delegate Begaye expressed his concern regarding the lack of cooperation from the Navajo Nation departments, specifically those who have not submitted their PCQ’s.

“Anytime we try to bring change, there is a natural resistance to it, so people ought to sit down and talk out the entire process, so when changes are made, they will remember that the best interest of the Navajo Nation should be kept in mind,” said Delegate Begaye.

In agreement, LOC member Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K’ai’bii’tó, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) added, “If programs are not turning in the PCQ’s, then they are not respecting the amendments made by HEHSC, and I think we need to get a list of these

programs that have not submitted the PCQ's so the committee [HEHSC] can assist DPM with these issues."

LOC vice chair Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) said that since most of the employment positions require a certain type of degree or certification, the pay scale should reflect their position.

"If you are going to require an associates or bachelor's degree, then the pay scale should also be included to be higher," said Delegate Shepherd.

Delegate Shepherd added that a large number of employees do not remain employed with the Navajo Nation due to the low pay-grade, so retention rates need to be improved and the pay scale reanalyzed.

LOC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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