



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Peterson B. Yazzie sworn in as interim delegate for the Navajo Nation Council



**PHOTO:** Peterson B. Yazzie was sworn in by Honorable Geraldine V. Benally with Window Rock Judicial District to serve as interim delegate for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council at the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, Arizona on August 31, 2016.

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Wednesday morning, Peterson B. Yazzie was sworn-in to serve on an interim basis as a member of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council, representing the communities of Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, and Bahastl'a'a'.

Delegate Yazzie is originally from Tohatchi, New Mexico and formerly served as a member of the 19th, 20th, and 21st Navajo Nation Councils. Upon taking the oath, Delegate Yazzie thanked the Council and legislative staff for welcoming him and said he looks forward to serving.

Delegate Yazzie will temporarily fill the vacated seat of former delegate Mel R. Begay, who was removed from office in April. On June 28, the five chapters held a special election to determine who would fill the position. However, the results of the election have since been challenged by a

candidate, which has prevented a new delegate from being sworn-in to serve the rest of the remaining four-year term.

In accordance with provisions outlined in the Navajo Election Code, Speaker LoRenzo Bates submitted a letter to the Navajo Election Administration on Aug. 26, officially appointing Delegate Yazzie to serve in the interim role of delegate until the June 28 election grievance is resolved.

The Navajo Election Code states the following in regards to interim appointments to Council:

Whenever there is a vacancy in a Council Delegate position during the first half of the term of Office, at the request of the affected Chapter or Chapters within a precinct, the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council may select and appoint an interim Delegate from the precinct until the vacancy is filled by special election and the new Delegate takes office. Prior to appointment by the Speaker, the qualifications of the individual recommended shall be reviewed by the Navajo Election Administration and the individual shall be certified only if he or she is qualified.

Delegate Yazzie will assume all duties and responsibilities immediately.

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