



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Navajo Nation Council applauds announcement of federal investigation into the shooting of Loreal Tsinigine

WINDOW ROCK – The 23rd Navajo Nation Council applauded Friday’s announcement that the U.S. Department of Justice will review the local investigation into the shooting death of 27-year-old Loreal Tsinigine, a member of the Navajo Nation, which occurred on March 27.

"The Navajo Nation Council is elated that the United States Department of Justice has made the decision to review the investigation into the shooting death of Loreal Tsinigine at the hands of Officer [Austin] Shipley," stated Speaker LoRenzo Bates. "While Maricopa County may allow Officer Shipley to escape criminal prosecution, we are hopeful that a federal investigation will bring justice for the Tsinigine family."

The Arizona Department of Public Safety investigated the shooting, which was later reviewed by the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office. Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery issued a letter on July 19 to Winslow Police Department Chief of Police Stephen Garnett, stating that Officer Shipley would not face criminal charges in the case.

Speaker Bates said the Council wholeheartedly supports the decision of the USDOJ and pointed out that the Office of the Speaker, Office of the President and Vice President, and the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission have all sought the intervention by the USDOJ.

On May 26, members of the Navajo Nation Council unanimously approved a resolution sponsored by Council Delegate Jonathan Hale, calling for U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch to investigate the Winslow Police Department in response to the shooting death of Tsinigine, who was originally from the small community of Teesto.

Council Delegate Lee Jack, Sr., who represents the community of Teesto, said community members are pleased with the announcement and called for a fair and timely investigation.

"The community and loved ones have had a very difficult time coping with the loss of Loreal and this announcement brings some hope and relief," said Delegate Jack. "We want justice for the family, the community, and the Navajo people."

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