



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Utah Tribal Leaders pass resolution opposing the BIA reorganization

SALT LAKE CITY – Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) and Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Jr. (Shonto, Naa'tsis'áán, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) participated in discussions related to health care, violence against American Indian women, human trafficking, education, the Bears Ears National Monument, and the U.S. Department of the Interior's proposed reorganization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs during the Utah Tribal Leaders quarterly meeting held on Thursday and Friday, in Salt Lake City.

The Utah Tribal Leaders is comprised of eight elected tribal leaders representing the eight tribes in the state of Utah, who are tasked with promoting initiatives and advocating for the needs of Native Americans residing in the state of Utah.

On the first day of the meeting, UTL chairman Delegate Filfred and Delegate Daniels provided a report that included updates on Navajo Nation issues related to the seven Utah Navajo communities including Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Red Mesa, Naa'tsis'Áán, Oljato, and Dennehotso.

In his report, Delegate Daniels continued to advocate for road and bridge improvements within the communities of Naa'tsis'áán, Oljato, and Ts'ah Bii Kin.



PHOTO: Tribal leaders during the opening day of the Utah Tribal Leaders quarterly meeting on Aug. 9, 2018 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Delegate Filfred highlighted the Navajo Nation and San Juan County elections, Navajo Code Talker Day, support for congressional bill H.R. 4518 relating to the expansion of the Bears Ears National Monument, opposition to Senate Bill 3193 which seeks to limit the establishment and extension of Utah national monuments, and support for Senate Bill 197 relating to the Radiation Exposure

Compensation Act Amendments of 2017, which would extend benefits for former uranium mine workers and others.

“Currently, there are many critical federal policies being considered that will impact Utah tribes. Therefore, all Utah tribal leaders need to continue to work and plan together for the well-being of our tribal citizens,” said Delegate Filfred.

During the meeting, Utah Diné Bikéyah executive director Gavin Noyes proposed a resolution, requesting to halt the expedited federal planning of the Bears Ears National Monument and to oppose any front country recreation uses of the Bears Ears Meadow.

“This is an important resolution that would help to protect our sacred lands, animals, and plants. In December, President Trump issued an illegal proclamation to reduce the monument designation, and has allowed the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service to plan for the monument reduction without the proper consultation with the tribes and without the court’s decision if President’s Trump proclamation was legal,” said Delegate Filfred.

Confederated Tribes of Goshute Reservation attorney Paul Tsosie, also sought the UTL’s support in opposing the U.S. Department of the Interior’s reorganization resulting from President Trump’s Executive Order 13781. The resolution states that the DOI and Bureau of Indian Affairs failed to properly consult with tribal nations regarding the reorganization, which violates the trust obligations under the U.S. Constitutional Treaty Clause. The Utah Tribal Leaders voted in support of the resolutions.

During the two-day meeting, the tribal leaders also received reports from the Utah Division of Indian Affairs, Utah Department of Health, Utah Department of Public Safety, Utah State of Education, Restoring Ancestral Winds, Utah Department of Human Services, and others.

The next Utah Tribal Leaders meeting is scheduled for November 15 and 16, which will be hosted by the Confederated Tribes of Goshute Reservation in Wendover, Utah.

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