



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Navajo Nation Council approves bill to lower recall petition requirements to hold elected officials more accountable**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council convened in a special session on Tuesday, to consider several legislations including a bill sponsored by Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) that seeks to amend the Navajo Election Code to lower the percentage of signatures required on recall petitions for all Navajo elected officials as a means to holding them more accountable for their conduct and actions while in office. The resolution will also be subject to consideration from President Russell Begaye.

When the legislation was brought before the Naabik'iyátí' Committee in October, Delegate Shepherd stated that the intent of the bill is to allow the Navajo people to hold their elected leaders accountable.

The Election Code currently states that elected officials are subject to recall by voters and that a petition for recalling an elected official must be signed by at least 60-percent of voters participating in the last election of such official. If the 60-percent signature requirement is met, ballots are prepared and a special recall election is conducted.

If the resolution passed by the Council into law, the percentage requirement would decrease to 45-percent. The Council approved the bill by a vote of 14-3 on Tuesday. The President will have 10 calendar days to consider the resolution once it is delivered to the Office of the President and Vice President.

On Tuesday, Council members also tabled Legislation No. 0224-18, which requests \$3 million from the Nation's Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance for Northern Arizona University to expand its existing Native American Cultural Center.

The Council also referred Legislation No. 0308-18 back to the Naabik'iyátí' Committee, which seeks the approval of the purchase of over 17,000 acres of property in Yavapai County in Arizona, and they also referred Legislation No. 0326-18 back to the Law and Order Committee, which seeks the approval funding from the Síhasin Fund for a justice center in the community of Pinon.

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