



**The 21<sup>st</sup> Navajo Nation Council**  
Contact: Alastair L. Bitsoi, Public Information Officer  
Phone: (928) 871-6384  
Cell: (928) 255-2943  
Fax: (928) 871-7255  
[abitsoi@navajo.org](mailto:abitsoi@navajo.org)  
[www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Intergovernmental Relations Committee opposes Arizona referendum to eliminate state affirmative action programs, Hopi carbon capture sequestration project**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Today, the Intergovernmental Relations Committee unanimously approved resolutions opposing an Arizona referendum that will eliminate affirmative action programs administered by the state and the Hopi Tribal Council-approved carbon capture sequestration project.

Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan sponsored the resolution (Tracking No. 0532-10) opposing the Arizona Civil Rights Amendment -- Proposition 107, which will be on the Nov. 2 ballot in Arizona. On June 22, 2009, the Arizona State Senate voted to put the measure on the ballot with a 17-11 party line vote.

"This resolution (Tracking No. 0532-10) opposes the referendum that would eliminate affirmative action programs administered by the state of Arizona and, if approved, would impact the Navajo Nation," Speaker Morgan said. "The passage of this resolution informs the State of the Navajo Nation's position."

Proposition 107 will be the first time Arizona voters vote on possibly eliminating affirmative action policies and, if approved, Article II of the Arizona State Constitution would be amended. Under the constitutional amendment, affirmative action policies would no longer apply to underrepresented communities, including women and people of color to have equal opportunity in "areas of public employment, higher education and contracting."

A similar version of this proposal known as Proposition 104 surfaced in 2008, but failed to collect enough signatures for the Nov. 4, 2008 ballot.

Speaker Morgan's resolution also directs the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to conduct public hearings and obtain public feedback on Proposition 107's potential impact on the Navajo people and other minority groups.

In other action, the committee unanimously passed a resolution (Tracking No. 0492-10), sponsored by Honorable Raymond Maxx, opposing the Hopi Tribal Council's "plan to research and allow" for carbon capture sequestration in the Black Mesa Basin. On Aug. 12, the Resources Committee passed the same resolution on a vote of 6-1.

Maxx said the Hopi Tribal Council recently approved the \$5 million pilot project, working with four utility companies and the U.S. Department of Energy. The pilot project, which is a new and experimental process, would store carbon dioxide from nearby power plants in an underground storage on Hopi and near Navajo communities.

"The Hopi Tribal Council has selected a site in the Black Mesa Basin," Maxx said. "The proposed site is near the Navajo Aquifer (N-Aquifer), our precious water source. Once carbon dioxide is injected into the N-Aquifer, it will contaminate the water source we share with the Hopi people, our main underground water supply."

Maxx also said that as neighbors the Hopi Tribal Council failed to consult the Navajo Nation with its proposal. Passage of the resolution also urges the federal government to deny the final implementation of the carbon capture sequestration plan.

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