



The 21st 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

www.navajonationcouncil.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Council amends agenda to add continuing resolution, amends Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On day one of its budget session, the 21st Navajo Nation Council voted in favor of adding a continuing resolution to its agenda and passed three amendments to the proposed Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget.

Honorable Young Jeff Tom (Mariano Lake/Smith Lake) motioned to amend the Council's budget session agenda by adding a continuing resolution (Tracking No. 0584-10) for emergency reasons in case the full Council does not adopt the proposed comprehensive budget. Honorable Davis Filfred (Mexican Water/Aneth/Red Mesa) seconded the motion, which was voted in favor by the Council, 55-22.

If the Council votes down the proposed Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget, Tom's continuing resolution would be adopted and would continue the operation of the current Navajo Nation government budget beginning Oct. 1 and ending March 31, 2011.

Once the amendment and agenda were approved, the Council opened up discussion on the Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget.

Honorable LoRenzo C. Bates (Upper Fruitland), chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee, is the sponsor of the Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget (Tracking No. 0570-10). Pursuant to the Navajo Nation Appropriations Act, Honorable Bates is recommending approval of the comprehensive operating budget on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Title 12 of the Navajo Nation Code states that the Budget and Finance Committee "shall make recommendations concerning the budget and submit it to the Navajo Nation Council pursuant to the time lines established in the Budget Instructions Manual" for the next fiscal year.

The comprehensive budget, if approved, would allocate the Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget of \$583.7 million to the Navajo Nation government: \$531 million to the Executive Branch, \$14.5 million to the Legislative Branch, \$14 million to the Judicial Branch, \$20 million to Fixed Costs, and \$4 million for Capital.

Currently, the Council has made three amendments to the proposed Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2011 Comprehensive Budget.

The Council approved an amendment motioned by Honorable Omer Begay, Jr., (Cornfields/Greasewood Springs/Klagetoh/Wide Ruins) that will shift funds from the Office of the Navajo Tax Commission's (ONTC) Personnel Expenses Business Unit (#106001.2001) to the ONTC's Travel Expense Business Unit (#106001.3000) and Supplies Business Unit (#106001.4000). The \$77,928 in the Personnel Expenses Unit would be broken into two categories: \$51,824 to the Supplies Business Unit and \$26,104 to the Travel Expenses Business Unit. The Council voted 30-29 to shift these funds.

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Honorable Begay said the purpose of this shift in funds is a result of the Senior Tax Attorney resigning, as the ONTC budgeted for an entry level tax attorney during FY 2011 for six months. If the selection and hiring of a Senior Tax Attorney happens sooner than the six month timeline the funds would be transferred back into the Personnel Business Unit.

On a vote of 46-14, the Council also voted in favor of carrying over Fiscal Year 2010 unexpended general fund balances from the Navajo Nation Council, Office of Legislative Council, Office of Legislative Services and Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to the Fiscal Year 2011. Honorable Curran Hannon (Oak Springs/St. Michaels) motioned for the amendment, which was seconded by Honorable David Tom (Beclabito/Gadiiahi).

"I urge members of the Council to consider the needs at the chapter level with these carryovers," added Honorable Lorenzo Curley (Houck/Lupton/Nahata Dził). "We have taken money back and reduced money going to the chapters for vital programs and we need to restore those dollars for necessary labor at the local level."

Honorable Katherine Benally (Dennehotso) motioned a third amendment, which the Council approved by a vote of 48-8. The amendment places a condition of appropriation on the Board of Education Business Unit #109026. If the condition of appropriation is not complied with by the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2011, the Board of Education would not be allowed to travel outside of the Navajo Nation. The Board of Education is expected to submit a full written status report on the development of Diné education content standards, curriculum and assessment, which represents unmet concern to fulfill stringent requirements of the Navajo Sovereignty Act of 2005.

Day two of the budget session will resume tomorrow at 10:00 am at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber. For more information, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org.

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