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## **Navajo President Shelly Signs Three Bills into Law**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed three different bills into law Tuesday, all of which were passed by the Navajo Nation Council last week during their summer session.

“With my signature, I am pleased to know that we are making progress in the Navajo Nation. Some of these changes are being made slowly, but we are preserving through and patiently creating change in the government that is stable,” President Shelly said.

First, the President’s signature on legislation CJY-37-13 took another step to create the Narbona Growth Fund, a holding corporation. Pending the Secretary of Interior approval, the fund could provide tax incentives enticing large corporations to expand their businesses on the Navajo Nation. In addition, the fund could also provide an avenue for potential business to operate as a joint venture, LLC, or as other corporations and would be able to perform business without federal taxes.

“We set this up from Division of Economic Development and the President’s Office to provide income to the people. When the fund gains traction, it will generate income. We envision that this action will attract manufacturing to the Nation. As an example, Raytheon Corporation, which exists on the Nation, if they received a new contract to build more defense systems and if they choose to go under this new corporation, they will be exempt from federal taxes. The company can save millions of dollars, which they can put into the Fund or the business,” Albert Damon, DED director, said.

Another incentive is that once the fund is set up as a federal charter, the Navajo Nation people would act as preferred stockholders and would eventually earn dividends from the Narbona Growth Fund.

“We are creating new ways to care for our people,” President Shelly said. “We also hoping the Narbona Growth Fund will be a way to lure big businesses to the Navajo Nation. I want to see retail, manufacturing and other businesses help strengthen our Navajo economy,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly signed legislation CJY-36-13 that strengthens Navajo sovereignty by providing \$354,297 to the Real Estate Department to develop a Navajo Land Title Data System.

The new system would incorporate a digital database for land records on the Navajo Nation. Goals of the new system would be to enhance data storage, protect data, establish Internet protocols that allows Navajo home site lease holders to pay their home site lease payments over the Internet, and create an online tracking system for land lease applications.

“We need to update one of the most important databases in the Navajo Nation. Having better records will strengthen our long term planning and will help keep accurate records of our lands. We need that to strengthen our sovereignty going forward. Strong record keeping is a sign of a strong nation,” President Shelly said.

The third bill President Shelly signed approves was use permits for Navajo Tribal Utility Authority for the San Juan River Animas La Plata Water Supply Project and the San Juan River “Run of the River or Native Flow” Water Project.

Legislation CYJ-34-13 establishes water permits for NTUA to supply water to the Shiprock area from the two water projects. In 2012 a water pipeline was completed that allows more water and the permits provide the approval to use more than 7,200 acre feet of water from the two water projects.

“Providing clean and safe drinking water to the Navajo Nation has always been high on my priority list. This water is part of the Southern Ute Settlement Act of 2000 and we are benefitting from the water settlement. The local Shiprock area will now have more safe drinking water to their availability making the community safer and healthier,” President Shelly said.

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