



## THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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# Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr. signs nine pieces of legislation, vetoes \$24 million spending bill to give money to chapters

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., today signed nine pieces of legislation and vetoed a \$24 million spending bill that would have drained the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund to give \$19 million to chapters despite not having a plan for its use.

Among the bills he signed into law are one to create a Veterans Trust Fund, one to fund a lawsuit against the federal government's mismanagement of Trust Assets for allottees, and one to establish the Gaming Development Fund.

- The President signed Resolution CO-54-06 to create a revenue-sharing plan between the Hogback Chapter and the Navajo Nation for gaming revenues generated within the Hogback Chapter boundaries. The agreement provides that 10 percent of the net gaming revenues will be distributed to the Hogback Chapter for the first five years of operation and that the central government will receive the remaining 90 percent.

After five years, the chapter will receive five percent of the net revenues and the Navajo Nation will receive the remaining 95 percent.

- The President approved a law that pays \$1.5 million for a water line extension project from Inscription House to Navajo Mountain. The bill contained riders to fund a \$161,000 weatherization program and \$161,400 to fund a solid waste program.

That bill also contained a \$50,000 rider for a public relations campaign to stop the sale of reclaimed water to Arizona Snowbowl and to prevent further desecration of the San Francisco Peaks.

- The President signed Resolution CO-57-06 to establish the Historical Trust Asset Mismanagement Litigation Trust Fund and allocate \$1.5 million annually to litigate trust asset mismanagement claims against the United States.

- Legislation to amend the Veterans Trust Fund would require four percent of all revenues earned by the Navajo Nation to be set aside and placed into the veterans fund.

- The President signed Resolution CO-52-06 to recommend amendments to the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. He noted that there needs to be increases in the amount of federal compensation paid to those who were exposed to fallout from the detonation of nuclear devices at the Nevada test site.

The new law seeks increases to \$100,000 for on-site participants and those who contracted certain diseases covered under the Act, and to expand claims for various types of cancers, disease and tissue injury. The amendments would also increase applicable employment times from 1971 to 1990.

- The President signed Resolution CO-56-06 to spend \$1.2 million from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to purchase the Counselor, N.M., Trading Post properties. The purchase includes 298 acres of fee land, and 2,538 acres of Bureau of Land Management land in Sandoval County.

- The President signed Resolution CO-59-06 to change the name of Hogback Chapter to Tse' Daa' Kaan Chapter.
- The President signed Resolution CO-58-06 to change the name of the Crownpoint Institute of Technology to Navajo Technical College to reflect its new status as an accredited college.
- In vetoing the \$24 million spending bill, Resolution No. CO-50-06, the President said that while he supports the intent of the original funding request – to provide \$1.2 million to the Department of Diné Education to pay for Head Start costs – he did not support the riders attached to this resolution.

One rider would have given \$19 million to the 110 chapters although there was no plan provided in the legislation to guide the spending of the money.

“There is no information provided about the purpose of the chapter allocation, nor is there any reasonable justification provided to significantly deplete the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund Balance,” the President said.

He said approval of the legislation would reduce the undesignated reserve to \$2 million down from \$26.1 when the law calls for it to be maintained at \$12.3 million – or 10 percent of the prior year general fund budget.

“This amount is well below what is required by law,” he said. “I continue to be extremely concerned that our expenditure of these funds for non-emergency supplemental appropriations will compromise the Navajo Nation’s ability to adequately address true emergencies should they arise.”

“As leaders, we have a duty to uphold the laws of the Navajo Nation and to be fiscally responsible,” he said. “Rather than trying to finance capital outlay projects on a piecemeal basis, I pledge to work closely with the Transportation and Community Development Committee of the 21<sup>st</sup> Council and with the entire Navajo Nation Council to bring forward a Capital Improvement Plan for consideration that is in conformance with the Appropriation Act.”

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