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### **COUNCIL APPROPRIATES FUNDS FOR HEAD START PROGRAM**

The Navajo Nation Council passed emergency legislation to appropriate funds for the Navajo Nation Head Start program on Monday, October 23, 2006.

Education Committee Vice Chairperson Wallace Charley (Shiprock) sponsored the emergency legislation asking for supplemental appropriations in the amount of \$1,247,450 for the Department of Diné Education. It passed with four amendments by a vote of 63 in favor and 2 opposed.

Charley informed the Council that the summary suspension had been lifted on Sept. 27, 2006, and that the program has made significant progress to correct problems with facilities management and administrative direction.

“There continues to be a concerted effort to build on that progress as the Navajo Nation Head Start plans to open additional centers beyond the initial 83 as soon as it is fiscally possible,” Charley said.

He noted that the federal government will not pay for expenditures incurred during the period of closure. For example, he said, billing continued for such expenses as rental, storage, some maintenance and insurance.

“Many continuing expenses that are needed to be addressed fully in order to maintain compliance with the federal government guidelines are health and safety issues at the child care facilities,” Charley said. “This includes the partial renovation of some buildings and classrooms. Many areas are in need of new electrical lines, waterlines, sewer systems, heating and cooling machinery, solid waste disposal, and stocking of classroom materials.”

Amendments that were attached to the emergency legislation included \$1 million for the Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board; \$500,000 for Tohajiilee Chapter; \$1,520,605.10 for a Judicial complex; and \$19.8 million to the 110 Chapters at \$180,000 each.