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Resources Committee passes legislation amending Title 18 of the Navajo Nation Code, bill will go before the Council’s spring session

Chapters will need to be consulted with and public hearings held, prior to the drafting of resolutions

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz – The Resources Committee of the 21st Navajo Nation Council met today during a special meeting and passed legislation amending Title 18 of the Navajo Nation Code or the mines and minerals law.

The legislation (Legislation No. 0135-10), sponsored by Council Delegate Amos Johnson (Forest Lake), strengthens the involvement of Navajo Nation Chapters in the negotiation of mineral leases and energy-related agreements. According to the legislation, Navajo Nation Chapters will need to be consulted with and public hearings held, prior to the drafting of resolutions by the Navajo Nation Council.

“The only time the local people met with mining officials was before mining occurred,” explained Johnson. “They were promised infrastructure and other benefits, but those officials never came back.”

“This legislation allows for chapters to have a voice today and tomorrow for coal leases and other mineral leases…and ensures future generations having a voice in negotiations,” Johnson said. “This bill not only benefits the Black Mesa area but all other communities rich in mineral resources.”

The chapters of Black Mesa and Forest Lake have requested to be part of negotiations of mineral leases and passed resolutions supporting this bill.

The committee passed the legislation on a 4-1 vote, which now goes before the 21st Navajo Nation Council’s floor during its spring session to be lawful.

“As a lawmaker, I am looking out for the welfare of the whole Navajo Nation,” Johnson added. “This legislation will be decided during the spring council session. I encourage the people to lobby their lawmakers to pass this important piece of legislation.”

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