FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Law and Order Committee receives report on law enforcement concerns in Alamo

ALAMO, N.M. – The Law and Order Committee received a report on Monday regarding law enforcement concerns in Alamo, and discussed the possibility of assigning a full-time Navajo Nation police officer to the area, located approximately 85 miles southeast of Albuquerque.

Alamo School Board executive director and former Socorro County Sheriff’s Office deputy chief Michael Hawkes, said he has advocated to have a police officer assigned to the Alamo area due to safety concerns regarding school children and the community.

“We are not out of the norm as far as criminal activity, in fact I can tell you that what is most daunting is the increased influx of heroin use, burglaries, and violent crimes in Alamo,” said Hawkes. “We are willing to assist in any way we can to make this happen.”

Hawkes stated that the Alamo School Board would provide free housing and office space to the officer who would be working and patrolling the school grounds and community full time.

Representative and longtime advocate for the improvement of public safety in the area, Council Delegate George Apachito (Alamo, Ramah, Tohajiilee), voiced his concern regarding the police response time.

“The police response time to Alamo is disheartening because it can take anywhere from 3-6 hours for an officer to respond and we need to fix that delay,” said Delegate Apachito.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate and former police officer Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) expressed his support of the school board’s initiative and suggested that they also implement an educational public safety program for kids at the community schools.

“I was a school resource officer in Ganado, and although I was there as an enforcer, I was able to interact and teach kids regarding potential problems they may face such as peer pressure, drugs, gangs, and alcohol,” said Delegate Shepherd. “It would be beneficial to also look at grants that can aid in offering a program like this to Alamo.”

LOC members voted 2-0 to accept the report.
A report later provided by the Navajo Nation Department of Justice informed the committee that the Memorandum of Agreement between Socorro County and the Navajo Nation is currently in place, and cross-commission training and certification will begin in the near future.

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