



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Law and Order Committee supports the creation of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council**

**LEUPP, Ariz.** – During a special meeting on Monday, the Law and Order Committee unanimously supported Legislation No. 0019-17, which would enact enabling legislation for the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council if approved by the Navajo Nation Council and the President.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Beclabito, Cove, Gadi'í'áhi/To'Koi, Red Valley, Tooh Haltsooi, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Tsé ałnáoz't'í'í) was joined by Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez, and stated that the proposed Youth Advisory Council would allow Navajo youth to engage with their tribal government in conversations and decision-making.

“The intent of the legislation is to empower and acknowledge our Navajo youth and their contribution to the Navajo Nation government decision-making. Our youth are an untapped resource that can provide innovative approaches to modern issues by blending traditional and modern concepts. Our youth are in a neat situation where they can navigate both systems and worlds. They see the world from a unique perspective,” stated Delegate Crotty.

According to the legislation, the Youth Advisory Council would be established under the executive branch and consist of 12 members, from ages 14 to 24 years old. Two members would be appointed from each of the five Navajo agencies and two members would serve to represent the Nation at-large. Membership would be recommended by the Office of Diné Youth and appointed by the President, Speaker, and Chief Justice.

LOC member Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) recommended that name of the Youth Advisory Council be changed to the “Navajo Nation Youth Commission” to allow more proactive participation from the youth.

“I recommend the Youth Council to change its name because we want our children to be more involved in the government. As an advisory council, they are limited. For example, the Veterans Advisory Council has so many challenges because they are limited to only give advice. Let's give our children a stronger authority. Our Navajo youth might lead us in the right direction as a government,” stated Delegate Begay.

The legislation states that the Youth Advisory Council would be responsible for providing policy recommendations, identifying issues for Navajo youth, and recommending amendments to the

enabling legislation or plan of operation. If approved, the Youth Advisory Council would be codified under Title II of the Navajo Nation Code.

The Law and Order Committee approved Legislation No. 0019-17 with a 4-0. The bill will move forward to the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, Naabik'iyátí' Committee, and the Navajo Nation Council.

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