



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Law and Order Committee approves \$500,000 allocation for the Dilkon Justice Center project

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee passed Legislation No. 0211-17, which approved an allocation of \$500,000 from the Judicial and Public Safety Fund for the project management, architectural, and engineering services costs for the Dilkon Justice Center.

The Judicial and Public Safety Fund is derived from the Navajo Nation's sales tax, which is utilized in accordance with a fund management plan for the benefit of public safety initiatives. The fund has a current balance of approximately \$6.6 million, according to the Office of the Controller.

Legislative sponsor, Council Delegate Lee Jack, Sr. (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone), who represents the Dilkon community, stated that the project has been an on-going initiative for many years and remains in need of additional funds to complete.

"Overall, \$500,000 is needed to assist in obtaining land withdrawals, utility and road easements, utility improvement cost proposals, and to develop procurement packages for consultants and contractors. A total of \$250,000 will be utilized for consulting and \$250,000 for architectural design," stated Delegate Jack.

"Dilkon would be a perfect central location for a justice center. The community already has a judicial center. This would help us address public safety concerns in Dilkon and surrounding communities and most importantly, it would reduce the response time of police officers," stated Dilkon Chapter president Lorenzo Lee, Sr.

LOC member Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi) questioned if the Navajo Nation Department of Corrections has detailed plans that would ensure the completion of the project.

"As I look at the budget forms that are attached to the legislation, NNDOC director Delores Greyeyes signed it. Do they have a plan or a timeline for this project? What if their plans are not adjacent with the chapter?" asked Delegate Tso.

Delegate Jack added, "The chapter has been working with the Department of Corrections on this project, but we don't understand why the project was moved down on the Judicial and Public Safety facilities fund priority list. This project should have been a priority."

On June 2, the LOC approved the Navajo Nation judicial and public safety facilities priority listing for fiscal years 2017 and 2018 and the Dilkon Justice Center was listed fifth on the priority listing.

LOC member Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) stated that the priority listing was recommended from the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, Navajo Nation Judicial Branch, and NNDOC.

“Most importantly, the Dilkon Justice Center is still on the priority listing and I support the community’s endeavors to address public safety within their region,” stated Delegate Begay.

The Law and Order Committee approved Legislation No. 0211-17 with a 2-1 vote and serves as the final authority for the bill.

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