



Navajo delegates express appreciation and support for HB2215 and HB2218 action in Arizona Legislature

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 28, 2021

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Members of the Navajo Nation Council voiced appreciation and support for two bills in the Arizona Legislature that would provide project funding to the Arizona Department of Transportation for Hopi Route 60 (H60) and Cornfields Chapter projects. Both bills received approval votes in the Arizona House Committee on Transportation on Wednesday.

House Bill 2215, sponsored by Representative Arlando Teller, LD-7, and cosponsored by Representative Myron Tsosie, LD-7, would appropriate \$35 million from the state general fund to the Hopi Tribe for the H60 construction project.

“On behalf of our Navajo communities, I appreciate Representative Teller for bringing these bills back to the table in Arizona’s new legislature. When it comes to Hopi Route 60, the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe continue to support the project because it will mean better access for school buses, emergency vehicles and our own citizens who travel to other states to shop when the road is washed out or flooded,” said Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain).

Hopi Route 60 begins along State Route 264 in northeastern Arizona and ties into Navajo Route N65 to the north near the Low Mountain Chapter community. The approximately 14-mile road is entirely earthen and, when operational, capable of greatly reducing round-trip distances for residents living the most remote areas.

The route is a crucial access road for both tribes, especially when it comes to school bus service, said Begay. “When it rains and gets muddy, school attendance drops significantly and students’ grades suffer.”

HB2215 is expected to be considered next by the Arizona House Committee on Appropriations on Wednesday, Feb. 3.

House Bill 2218, sponsored by Rep. Teller and cosponsored by Rep. Tsosie, would appropriate \$532,700 from the state general fund to distribute to the Navajo Nation for the Cornfields Chapter low-water crossing improvement project.

“The Cornfields community has contributed \$266,000 of its own project funds to improve this crossing for safety and access,” said Council Delegate Vince James (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kinłichii, Steamboat). “The low-water crossing just off Navajo Route N15 is impassable during rainy or muddy days for anyone going between the Navajo Station, Sunrise, Greasewood and Cornfields areas. We fully support House Bill 2218 because it’s a targeted and impactful investment towards improving access for our communities.”

The project location is approximately 13 miles south of Burnside along Navajo Route N15 on N9205. The earthen road crosses the Pueblo Colorado Wash immediately and is impassable for extended periods during precipitation events in the region.

HB2218 was advanced by the Arizona House Committee on Transportation on Wednesday and will be considered next by the Committees on Appropriations and Rules.

If fully approved by the Arizona Legislature, funding for the Cornfields low-water crossing project will be administered by the Navajo Nation Division of Transportation.

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