



The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

22nd Council to adopt new speaker selection process in special session, new speaker to be seated during winter session

"Here, you get a chance to be recognized for your leadership, just as it was when our founding naataaniis were chosen," – Speaker Pro Tem Jonathan Nez

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – After many hours discussing how to restructure the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council petitioned to hold a special session immediately before the 2011 Winter Session begins at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber. The Council will begin its special session Monday, Jan. 24 at 9 a.m. and its regular winter session thereafter at 10 a.m.

On Friday, the Council signed a petition and agreed to hold a special session to adopt new speaker selection rules. Many members from the Council said the change from the current speaker selection process to one that will allow the nomination of speaker candidates offers a more transparent process.

"I think its just one way of returning to how leaders were chosen, by nominations, rather than filing an application for oneself," Speaker Pro Tem Jonathan Nez said. "Here, you get a chance to be recognized for your leadership, just as it was when our founding naataaniis were chosen."

Honorable Katherine Benally, among many other Council delegates, also agreed and said the new speaker selection process provides many benefits to the Navajo people.

"The point is we're visiting all the policies in the spirit of starting fresh and adopting things that benefit the people at large," Benally said. "That is how this new Council is operating and we want transparency."

Following its special session, the Council will convene for its 2011 Winter Session to formally select the Speaker of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council. By statute, the first item on the winter session agenda is the selection of the new speaker. Other items on the winter session agenda include the adoption of amended Council floor rules; amendments to Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code, including a new legislative process; the adoption of the new four standing committee structure and the Naa Bik'í Yáti' Committee; oral reports from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services; the State of the Nation address by Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and the address by the new Speaker of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council.

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