



## The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council agrees to four standing committee structure to operate the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – The 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council has identified committee restructuring and issues relating to the 2011 Navajo Nation Comprehensive Budget as priorities in preparation for the 2011 Winter Session. The Council's priority to restructure the committee system of the Legislative Branch corresponds to a mandate by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

Earlier today, the Council separated into two think tanks to discuss how the current twelve committee oversight duties could be consolidated to a four committee structure. On Thursday, the Council agreed the new committee system would consist of four total standing committees, based on the number "four" as a significant figure in Navajo cosmology. After extensive discussion, both groups efficiently arrived at a consensus of a four committee system to be adopted formally during the 2011 Winter Session. The four committee system is a consolidation from the previous 12 committee structure:

1. Budget and Finance Committee
2. Public Safety, Judiciary, and Ethics and Rules Committees
3. Humans Services, Health and Social Services, and Education Committees
4. Transportation and Community Development, Resources, and Economic Development Committees

Currently, the new Council agrees to delegate the duties and powers of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee to the full Council. The Council is also determining where the roles and duties of the Government Services Committee would be established within the new system; however, most agree it should become part of a newly established committee called the Committee of the Whole, or Naa'bi'k'i yati, which translates to "one voice of a group."

The Council is also discussing how they can integrate Navajo traditional concepts of thinking, planning, life, and the achievement process into the restructuring of the committee system, and will receive a report tomorrow from the Diné Policy Institute on how they can implement these concepts.

On Monday, the Council will continue discussions relating to the DPI report, as it relates to a new legislative process and the proposed new four committee system. On Tuesday, the Council will utilize reports from the Navajo Office of Management and Budget and the Navajo Office of the Controller to better inform their restructuring efforts in addition to impending negotiation with the executive and judicial branches, pursuant to the Fiscal Year 2010 Continuing Resolution, which currently operates the Navajo Nation government.

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