NNHRC encourages Navajo citizens to provide testimony at the AIRC public hearing on October 14th in Window Rock and October 17th in Tuba City

ST. MICHAELS, Ariz.—The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission encourages testimony from Navajo citizens at the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission’s public hearing scheduled at 1 p.m. (MDT)/12 noon (MST), Friday, October 14, 2011, at the Navajo Nation Museum, Hwy. 264 & Loop Road in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (AZ) and at 10 a.m. (MDT)/9 a.m. (MST) on Monday, October 17, 2011, at the Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites, Junction Hwy 160 in Tuba City, Arizona. The AIRC public hearing is open to the public.

Arizona’s IRC adopted its draft legislative map and its draft congressional map early this month for redistricting efforts, and seeks public comment about the legislative and congressional maps. To see the maps, visit www.nnhrc.navajo-nsn.gov/redistricting.html or www.azredistricting.org.

The adopted legislative map up for public comment meets and exceeds the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and it should sail through the U.S. Department of Justice or U.S. District Court preclearance process. It maintains the “Community of Interest” as it keeps the Navajo “Ranches” and sacred sites intact in the district the Navajo Nation is located in (meaning the San Francisco Peaks); and it maintains two border towns: Page and Winslow.

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The legislative maps are supported by the Navajo Nation, including NNHRC.

The adopted congressional map up for public comment creates a vast rural Congressional District 1 from the northern Navajo Nation border to the border of Mexico, making headway in sending a Native American from Arizona to Congress. The congressional district includes most indigenous nations’ located in Arizona.

The congressional maps are supported by the Navajo Nation, including NNHRC and meets NNHRC redistricting goals. It upholds the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and keeps the Navajo “Ranches” and sacred sites intact in District 1.

NNHRC and the Naabik’iyati’ Committee Redistricting Workgroup, which consists of five Navajo Nation Council Delegates, two from Arizona, two from New Mexico and one from Utah, want to ensure that Navajo people have the equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice to represent them in areas like the Sheriff seat, County seat, and State and U.S. seats.

NNHRC is authorized to address discriminatory actions against the citizens of the Navajo Nation. As Arizona [a covered jurisdiction, aka a Section 5 state] is federally recognized for racially discriminating against minority peoples in terms of voting rights, NNHRC has been directed by the Navajo Nation Speaker to address redistricting efforts for the Navajo Nation in states it is located: Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

The Navajo Nation, including NNHRC, diligently supported the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to protect Navajo voting rights and provided extensive input to the legislative and congressional redistricting process.

For more information to define what redistricting means for the Navajo Nation, visit the NNHRC website at www.nnhrc.navajo-nsn.gov/redistricting.html.