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Navajo President Shelly Vetoes Bill to Increase Council Stipends

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly vetoed a bill on Monday that would have increased the amount of stipends Navajo Council Delegates receive for attending meetings.

Legislation CJY-28-13 would have amended Title 2 by removing language that defined the type of meetings that Council Delegates could receive stipends for. Essentially, the bill would have allowed stipends for all attended meetings except orientation meetings.

“I have to express my disappointment in the passage of this Legislation,” President Shelly wrote in a memorandum to Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize, adding that programs throughout the Navajo Nation government are facing budget cuts as high as 25 percent.

“Additionally, the FY 2014 Indirect Cost (IDC) will decrease \$10 million that will result in employee layoffs. However, working through the budget process we are trying to find ways to alleviate as many lay offs as possible,” President Shelly wrote.

The legislation was passed during the Navajo Council’s summer session with a unanimous vote, 18 – 0.

“I have confidence the Council will recognize the merit of this Veto and understand the counsel my office and oversight committees have advised the programs they obligated to ‘do more with less,’” President Shelly concluded.

The Navajo Council can override President Shelly’s veto with a two-thirds majority vote.

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