



## Joint Press Release

Navajo Nation Office  
of the President and the Vice President  
and Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **New Mexico State Senate does not place the Navajo Nation Gaming Compact on the Senate Floor for a vote**

The Senate for the State of New Mexico Legislature did not move the Navajo Nation Compact to the Senate floor for a vote despite the Navajo Nation working five years to present this Compact before the State Legislature.

“The Navajo Nation has in good faith and respectfully followed the State process under the New Mexico Compact Negotiation Act,” Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said. “The Navajo Nation is very disappointed that the Senate for the New Mexico Legislature did not move the Compact to the Senate floor for a vote as required by law.”

Sen. George Munoz (D-Gallup), whose district includes a majority of Navajo voters, did not introduce the joint resolution, and the Gaming Compact was not put on the Senate floor for a vote, although the New Mexico Compact Negotiation Act requires the legislature to act without delay.

“The Navajo legal team worked closely with the State’s Legislative Council Service to ensure compliance with all the proper and legal procedures throughout this process,” said Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates, Chairman of the Navajo Nation Gaming Subcommittee Taskforce.

As a result of the State Senate delaying and not moving the Compact, the Navajo Nation’s investment into the gaming industry is jeopardized and it also places 950 jobs at risk for New Mexicans.

If the Compact was approved, the State would have received approximately \$10 million dollars a year and resolved a long standing dispute on Free Play.

“The Navajo Nation worked diligently to ensure that jobs and revenue were secure for the Navajo Nation and the State of New Mexico,” Speaker Johnny Naize said. “Unfortunately, our five year effort to present the compact before the legislature was viewed as rushed.”

In compliance with the New Mexico Compact Negotiation Act, the Navajo Nation first requested the State of New Mexico to commence negotiations with Governor Richardson’s administration in 2008.

Over a period of two years and after the submittal of several letters requesting to commence negotiations, Governor Richardson commenced negotiations in the spring of 2010 and he continued to negotiate to the end of his term.

In February 2011, after the election of Governor Susanna Martinez, the Navajo Nation continued requesting the State to commence negotiations.

With the appointment of Governor Martinez's Lead Negotiator in April 2012, the Navajo Nation began to have an open line of communication as to the Navajo Nation's key principle positions of the Compact.

The Navajo Nation began negotiations with Governor Martinez's Lead Negotiator in May 2012.

After months of tough negotiations, the Governor's Office and Navajo Nation came to a final agreement on the terms of the Compact.

On Mar. 8, Governor Martinez submitted the Navajo Nation Compact to the Committee on Compacts.

On Tuesday, Mar. 12, the Committee on Compacts, by a vote of 11-4-1, recommended approval of the Compact and submission of a joint resolution to the New Mexico Legislature for an up or down vote by the Senate.

"This is an important matter to the Navajo Nation and its people. The Navajo Nation will continue to respect and follow the State process under the New Mexico Compact Negotiation Act in moving the Compact forward," Delegate Bates said.

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