



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

MEDIA CONTACT:

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

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HEHSC Advances ADA Compliance with Key Initiatives and Allocated Funding



The Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Aging presented an update report on ADA compliance issues pertaining to governmental facilities across the Nation.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - On Monday, April 29, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) held a special meeting focusing on the progress of Resolution CJY-38-22 in addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance relating to chapters and chapter facilities.

CJY-38-22, passed on August 14, 2022, allocated funding from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFb) for necessary renovations at various Navajo Nation government facilities. These modifications are designed to make these facilities accessible to persons with disabilities, thereby also benefiting the elderly and disabled veteran communities.

HEHSC Chair Vince James noted that a collaborative effort is required for continued progress.

“When moving forward with the ADA compliance initiative, the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities (NNACD) will need to work with Marcus Tully of Navajo Nation Division of General Services (NNDGS) and the council delegates to draft legislation to address the pending issues,” Chair James said.

President of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities (NNACOD), Hoskie Benally, Jr. said that these initiatives will not only benefit the disabled but it also the needs of the elderly and disabled veteran communities.

The ADA compliance efforts cover several essential areas, including employment, housing, public accessibility, and voting rights, ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in societal functions. One area of focus has been the employment sector, with the Navajo Nation working diligently to integrate more inclusive policies.

Marcus Tulley, Department Manager III of Division of General Services, noted that authority over funding for fairgrounds and Chapter Houses are under Executive Branch and if reallocations of funds are required, it will happen after an assessment from the architect.

Delegate Dr. Andy Nez emphasized the importance of accountability and planning in these initiatives, recommending that “the NNACOD include data in future reports supporting the allocation of funding for each project. A budget plan from each chapter will benefit the NNACOD with accessing funding.”

New mandates require that a significant percentage of newly constructed homes meet specific accessibility standards to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Thus, the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) has been tasked with increasing the availability of accessible housing units. This is aimed at addressing and rectifying the current shortfall in suitable housing options.

In terms of ADA compliance to voting sites, significant advancements have been made to ensure that all polling places are accessible. This move not only adheres to federal requirements but also promotes an inclusive democratic process, allowing individuals with disabilities to exercise their voting rights without hindrance.

Looking ahead, the Navajo Nation remains committed to continuous improvement in ADA compliance. Future plans include extensive training programs for Navajo Nation employees to better serve individuals with disabilities and the development of new accessibility standards for public spaces and community events.

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