



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Council Delegate Carl Slater applauds Navajo Transit System relocation to Transportation Division

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PHOTO: HEHSC Vice Chair Carl Slater joins President Jonathan Nez for resolution signing at Navajo D.O.T.

TSE BONITO, N.M. — Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) Vice Chairman Carl Slater of the 24th Navajo Nation Council joined President Jonathan Nez and Navajo Division of Transportation (NDOT) Division Director, Garret Silversmith, for the signing ceremony of Resolution No. CO-59-21 approving the transfer of the Navajo Transit System from the Division of General Services to the Navajo DOT.

The resolution unanimously passed by a vote of 22 in favor during the October Fall Session and was sponsored by Vice Chair Slater.

“Our Navajo families rely on the transit system to obtain groceries and get essential supplies year-round. This transfer of service ensures the transit system operates more efficiently within the Navajo Division of Transportation.” said Vice Chair Carl Slater (Round Rock, Rock Point, Tséché’izí, Lukachukai, Tsaile-Wheatfields). “This move envisions a Navajo future of multimodal transportation where hybrid buses are integrated with roadway planning. We exercise our sovereignty today, and we must rise to the occasion to provide the best transit service for our Navajo people.”

The Navajo Nation Department of Justice reviewed the amendments to the Navajo Transit System plan of operation and organizational chart, determining the changes to be legally sufficient. Moving forward, the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) will provide legislative oversight.

“It is exciting to be here today because it was an idea that was planned years ago and this transfer of services is finally happening,” said NDOT Director Garret Silversmith. “The plan is to look to the future of what a dynamic transportation system looks like for a tribal nation. Our roads and buses are utilized daily for shopping activities, local medical hospitals, and to get our tribal employees to work. We would like to expand our routes because Navajo highways connect communities.”

Budget and Finance Committee Vice Chair Raymond Smith, Jr., and Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., attended alongside representatives from the Navajo Transit System and Navajo DOT, for the ceremony with Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer.

“Our public transportation is an economic driver for our nation and a lifeline for Navajo college students going to school,” said Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain). “Especially during this pandemic, we need reliable public transportation so our families can travel safely for work, school, and for their essential items like groceries. We need to connect all 110 Chapters with our transit service that has hybrid buses with bus stops.”

NDOT Director Garret Silversmith commended Ms. Tanya Jim for her appointment as the newly-delegated manager for the Navajo Transit System, who begins her new role this week.

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