



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Fall Session Adjourns, Navajo Nation Council passes Historic Legislations

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PHOTO: The Navajo Nation Council Chamber in Window Rock, Ariz.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 24th Navajo Nation Council passes multiple legislation to ban commercial smoking tobacco in public places, the transfer of the Navajo Transit System to the Navajo Division of Transportation (NDOT), and over \$900,000 for the unmet needs of the Judicial Branch during the 2021 Fall Session at the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, Ariz.

On Tuesday, among the bills approved was Legislation No. 0190-21 providing \$600,000 from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFb) to the Navajo Election Administration to address unmet needs and \$961,438 for the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch for the 2022 fiscal year. Sponsored by Honorable Speaker Seth Damon, the legislation passed by a vote of 22 in favor and 0 opposed.

“We appreciate President Jonathan Nez and Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne for working with the Legislative Branch to come into agreement that any unmet needs be funded through a UUFb appropriation,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Łichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh). “As our courtrooms begin to safely open during this pandemic, it is important to the Navajo people that the Judicial Branch efficiently process the backlog of court cases. This legislation also provides necessary funding to safely operate our upcoming Navajo elections and effectively protect our election staff and poll workers from COVID-19.”

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Legislation No. 0201-21 approved the transfer of the Navajo Transit System from the Division of General Services to the Navajo Division of Transportation. Sponsored by Council Delegate Carl Slater, the legislation passed by a vote of 22 in favor and 0 opposed.

“Through sensible reform, our nation has streamlined the planning, development, and delivery of transit services,” said Council Delegate Carl Slater (Round Rock, Rock Point, Tséché’izí, Lukachukai, Tsaille-Wheatfields). “Our Navajo families rely on the transit system to travel to purchase groceries and get essential supplies year-round. This move ensures the transit system operates more efficiently within the Navajo Transportation Division.”

Legislation No. 0211-21 requests for the United States Congress to host congressional hearings regarding the approval of uranium mining, the long-term outcomes, and the remediation and reclamation effects of uranium mining within the Navajo Nation. Sponsored by Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., the legislation passed by a vote of 22 in favor and 0 opposed.

“This legislation sends an urgent request to the United States Congress to refocus and hear directly from the Navajo people most affected by uranium mining and contamination,” said Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain). “Congressional hearings are an important part of our nation-to-nation relationship with the federal government and the trust responsibility to tribes. The healing of families can only begin when past wrongs are made right.”

The Niłch’ éi Bee Ííńá - Air is Life Act of 2021 received a majority of votes by the 24th Navajo Nation Council that prohibits the use of commercial tobacco products in enclosed, indoor workplaces or public places, and within 25 feet of any indoor area across the Navajo Nation. This legislation was passed by a vote of 20 in favor and 3 opposed.

Speaker Seth Damon has 10 days after a session to certify legislation. Following this process, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez has 10 days to either veto or approve.

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