



24th Navajo Nation Council

Office of the Speaker

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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee Holds Regular Meeting at Tuba City Hospital, Receives Report from TCRHCC



Members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council Health, Education, and Human Services Committee stand with executive leadership of the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation at the corporation's leadership boardroom. The HEHSC held a regular meeting at TCRHCC May 20, 2019.

TUBA CITY, Ariz. – The 24th Navajo Nation Council Health, Education, and Human Services Committee convened at the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation in Tuba City, Ariz., to consider several legislations and to hear a report from the Health Care Corporation on May 20, 2019.

Bill sponsor Delegate Kee Allen Begay Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Blue Gap/Tachee, Tselani/Cottonwood) presented his Legislation 0023-19, a bill that would strengthen the coordination of the deployment of the dedicated cellular network called FirstNet that prioritize first responders' access to cell towers during times of emergency on the Nation.

"I nearly was nearly a part of a terrible accident in Tsaile (Ariz.) and tried calling 911. I didn't get through," said Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tsé Ch'izhí). "I think a dedicated line to hook up with police officers needs to happen."

FirstNet partnered with AT&T to deploy this nationwide effort.

Chair Daniel E. Tso (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) had a concern that there might be a turf fight with cell phone carriers on the Navajo Nation.

FirstNet is a priority based communications network offering mission critical services to first responders and other emergency personnel that will give them high-priority access to voice and data communications, especially during times of an emergency. When the program is complete within a proposed five-year time frame even remote rural areas on the Navajo Nation could have emergency access to FirstNet.

The measure received unanimous approval sending the legislation to the Naabik'íyáti' Committee.

Delegate Begay also presented Legislation 0019-19, a bill that requests the U.S. Veterans Affairs Administration to establish direct services on the Navajo Nation for Navajo veterans.

"There are a variety of programs available to our veterans; we went to the Veterans Administration, they always say there's no funding," Delegate Begay said. "It's bad that our veterans on the Nation need to travel all the way to Phoenix to receive treatment."

The legislation reaffirms the 23rd Navajo Nation Council's passage of NABIN-69-18, and authorizes President Jonathan Nez, Council Speaker Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh), and the Navajo Washington Office to advocate for this request.

The committee approved the measure 3-0. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee will consider this legislation at an upcoming meeting.

The committee also considered Legislation 0084-19, an action amending the Navajo Nation Dept. of Diné Education Office of Special Education Rehabilitation (OSER). The bill updates the language of the plan of operation of OSER, which received unanimous consent as a final authority.

Legislation 0119-19 was also considered which amends the Navajo Office of Vital Records and Identification (NOVRI). The bill updates the language of the plan of operation for NOVRI, mainly changing the Navajo Nation "Photo Identification Card / Navajo Nation Passport" to be called "Tribal Identification Card." The measure received unanimous consent and HEHSC is final authority.

HEHSC voted in favor of scheduling its next regular meeting at Diné College Monday, June 10, in Tsaile.

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