



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. advocates for the expansion of the Boys and Girls Club on the Navajo Nation**



**PHOTO: Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. speaks to the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council about the Many Farms Boys and Girls Club in Many Farms, Ariz. on June 15, 2018.**

**MANY FARMS, Ariz.** – Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood), addressed members of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council to request their support in advocating for the continuation and expansion of programs and initiatives offered through the local Boys and Girls Club and Office of Diné Youth, during their regular meeting held at the Many Farms Boys and Girls Club on Friday.

On June 8, Delegate Begay issued a memorandum to the Office of the President and Vice President, Department of Diné Education, and the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee chair, requesting a meeting to discuss the future of programs that benefit Navajo youth, particularly funding allocations and the operating structure of such programs.

“As leaders, we look to you for input and advice to determine what is needed to help the Boys and Girls Club become more successful and to reach out to more of our youth in all 110 chapters on the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Begay. “I want you to have a stronger voice and stronger advocacy. Your voices can make a big difference.”

He told the Youth Council members that he envisions the Boys and Girls Club and the Office of Diné Youth working together to offer more hands-on activities such as, farming, irrigating, learning to care for livestock, horsemanship, and sports activities that teach youth the value of sportsmanship. He stated that providing such activities would deter youth from becoming victims of alcohol use, substance abuse, gang violence, suicide, and other issues that are prevalent in many communities.

The Many Farms Chapter passed a resolution on June 12, requesting the Office of the President and Vice President, Department of Diné Education, and the Navajo Nation Council to continue operating the Boys and Girls Club and to strategically implement the intended purpose of the program for the benefit of Navajo youth.

During his presentation, Delegate Begay said he would push for increased funding during the upcoming budget session that will be held to develop the Navajo Nation’s fiscal year 2019 Comprehensive Budget.

He also encouraged the Youth Council members to become more knowledgeable and involved in chapter meetings, school board meetings, and other committees and boards.

“Community involvement is important for all youth if they want to make a bigger impact for your peers,” added Delegate Begay. “I want you to become the law makers, policy makers, and to be in a position to allocate funding for our communities – that is what I envision for all of you.”

In April 2017, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council established the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council under the executive branch, consisting of 12 members ages 14 to 24 years old. The purpose of the Youth Council is to provide policy advice to the President, Navajo Nation Council, and the Judicial Branch in regards to youth issues and concerns. They are also tasked with identifying issues impacting Navajo youth and to offer guidance and solutions to tribal leaders.

Delegate Begay thanked the Youth Council for holding their meeting in Many Farms on Friday, and offered his continued support and advocacy for their efforts.

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