



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL  
Office of the Speaker

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## Naabik'iyáti' Committee hosts Work Session for Navajo Veterans

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PHOTO: Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. advocates for veterans during the Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony at the Navajo Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Ariz.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Yesterday, the Naabik'iyáti' Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council hosted a work session to discuss amending the selection process for the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director and amending the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund.

Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. is the prime sponsor for both Legislation No. 0021-22, which was heard during the Summer Session, and Legislation No. 0024-22 which was presented during a Special Session last month.

Both legislations were referred back to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee for a work session with Navajo Veterans, the Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council and the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration.

“Our Navajo veterans are a top priority and leadership at all levels need to come together to support our warriors,” said Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain). “The dialogue between Council and veterans will continue with a work session with the Eastern and Western Agency Veterans.”

Legislation No. 0021-22 would amend the selection process for the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director and change the Advisory Council to a Commission to grant more authority over veteran matters.

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Members of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council and several Commanders, Co-commanders, and Vice Commanders from all Veterans Agency Organizations joined the call to voice their concerns.

“The right to discuss and comment on all legislative matters is rooted within our democracy to ensure respect for everyone’s opinion,” said Delegate Otto Tso (Tónaneesdizi). “In order to preserve that same state of democracy, we must remember that compromise is necessary to do what is best for our Nation.”

A shared concern among the Advisory Council and commanders was the need for transparency as well as amending language within the two legislations to allow Navajo speaking veterans to become more actively involved.

Resources and Development Committee Chairman Rickie Nez (T’iistsoh Sikaad, Nenahnezad, Upper Fruitland, Tsé Daa K’aan, Newcomb, San Juan) made recommendations for the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director position to be required to speak Navajo. The requirement would allow the Executive Director to directly communicate and relay critical information to the Navajo constituents who do not understand English.

Members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council and the Advisory Council came to the agreement that public hearings and complete transparency relating to the two legislations need to occur before moving forward.

“Our democratic values have been the foundation for our Navajo people and will continue to lead us to a brighter and positive future,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh). “The livelihood of our people depends on the understanding and compromise to retain balance amongst our Nation.”

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