



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Council members continue advocating for justice for victims of fraudulent sober living homes



Members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council furthered advocacy with Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs addressing fraudulent sober living homes in Arizona.

PHOENIX, Ariz. — On Tuesday, Council Delegates Vince James and Helena Nez Begay joined Arizona tribal leaders as they met with Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs, to address the pressing issue of fraudulent sober living homes operating within the state and affecting members of all Arizona tribes including the Navajo Nation.

Gov. Hobbs was joined by Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) Cabinet Executive Officer Carmen Heredia, Office of the Governor Director of Operations Ben Henderson, and Director of Tribal Affairs Jason Chavez to provide updates regarding the state's efforts to enhance regulatory oversight of sober living home providers and implementing effective measures to safeguard the well-being of individuals in recovery.

"I thank Gov. Hobbs and her team, on behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, for addressing many of the issues related to the fraudulent activity. In the state of Arizona, we need tougher laws to regulate the providers and prevent further illegal activities, but we also need to continue providing much more additional support to the victims and their families and that includes those who have passed on," said Delegate James, who chairs the Council's Health, Education, and Human Services Committee.

The Governor's Office reported that since the crisis came to light, the state has received over 31,000 calls through the "211" referral phone service from the general public related to reports of missing persons, request for resources, reports of abuse and neglect, and other inquiries.

Delegates James and Begay also reminded state leaders that during a meeting with the Arizona Attorney General in January, there was discussion of a possible victims fund to assist victims and their families with costs associated with the fraudulent sober living homes. Several tribal leaders also called for the state to provide financial assistance to the families of lost loved ones.

AHCCCS Cabinet Executive Officer Carmen Heredia also reported that the agency has implemented improvements including the hiring of additional staff, creating an enhanced identity verification for providers, increased controls and limits on billing for alcohol and drug treatment services, and suspending payments to over 300 providers suspected of fraudulent activities.

"Many Navajo families and tribal members throughout the state have been heavily impacted and many more are still fighting for justice. By working with state leaders and officials, we must continue to advocate and provide additional resources to uplift our people and save more lives," said Delegate Begay.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council continues to work with Gov. Hobbs, Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes, and others to address fraudulent sober living homes and to provide additional resources to victims. To learn more about AHCCCS reforms and resources, please visit <https://azahcccs.gov/soberlivingfraud>(<https://azahcccs.gov/soberlivingfraud>).

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