



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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25th Navajo Nation Council joins President Nygren in signing legislation to strengthen opposition to uranium transportation



Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren shakes hands with Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson after signing CAU-37-24 into law.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Thursday, members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren as he signed CAU-37-24 into law, amending the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act (RMTA) of 2012 to further protect the Nation against the unauthorized transportation of uranium.

Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson, who sponsored Legislation 0198-24, signed into law as CAU-37-24, is a resident of Cameron, Ariz., which is in the Western AUM Region where the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified more than 100 abandoned uranium mine claims.

“This is something that is dear to my heart. I want to work together with all our partners and tribal nations to stand together in protecting our people,” Delegate Johnson said.

Executive Director of the Navajo Environmental Protection Agency Steven Etsitty stated that when the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act of 2012 was initially signed into law there were no renewal uranium mines in operation.

"Now we have companies engaged in renewing their mining claims and moving forth with actual mining," Etsitty said. "We face the imminent aspect of more and more transport. We found ways to strengthen it (RMTA)."

On July 30, Energy Fuels Resources, a uranium production company located near the Grand Canyon in Arizona, dispersed two unauthorized trucks carrying uranium ore to pass through the Nation while in transit to the White Mesa Mill in Utah for processing.

President Nygren said on August 2, he joined protesters who shut down Highway 89 in Cameron, protesting the unauthorized transport of uranium ore.

"We were very clear that when you come onto the Navajo Nation, whether it's a state route or a Bureau of Indian Affairs route, or whatever you want to call it, you are in the boundary of the Navajo Nation," President Nygren said. "We want to make it clear that the people who live and reside on the Nation should be respected at all times."

"These companies are not going to stop," said Delegate Johnson. "We have to strengthen our laws and statutes to protect our people, not just the Navajo Nation but all tribal nations."

President Nygren and Council Delegate Johnson both thanked the 25th Navajo Nation Council for unanimously passing the legislation.

Council Delegates Norman Begay and Amber Kanazbah Crotty were both in attendance at the signing ceremony.

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