



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Naabik'iyáti' Committee supports legislation for \$148 million for senior centers



The Naabik'iyáti' Committee approved Legislation No. 0135-24

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Naabik'iyáti' Committee approved Legislation No. 0135-24 which proposed to appropriate \$148 million from the Síhasin Fund for infrastructure improvements at senior centers across the Navajo Nation.

The decision followed extended discussions among delegates, many of whom raised concerns about the need for a more detailed and structured approach to the allocation of funds. The discussions centered around whether the proposed expenditure plan was adequate to meet the varying infrastructure needs of senior centers across the Nation.

Council Delegate Herman Daniels supported a regionalized approach to senior center projects. "It's essential that we consolidate manpower and resources to benefit all chapters. A regional approach will allow us to effectively address the infrastructure needs of our senior centers, ensuring that all elders receive equitable support," Daniels said.

While the legislation initially focused on renovations and ADA compliance at the Crownpoint Senior Center, delegates acknowledged that senior centers across the Navajo Nation needed more comprehensive attention. The Office of Legislative Counsel emphasized the importance of adhering to statutory requirements tied to the Síhasin Fund and ensuring that the long-term goals for senior centers were met.

The Committee ultimately recommended amending Legislation 0135-24 to allocate \$450,000 specifically for the Crownpoint Senior Center, while simultaneously drafting a broader funding plan for other senior centers. This new plan is expected to allocate over \$35 million and involve direct input from local chapters and senior centers to ensure their unique needs are addressed.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty highlighted the urgency of addressing senior center infrastructure needs across the entire Nation.

“Our senior centers play a critical role in supporting the well-being of our elders,” Crotty said. “By taking the time to assess the larger picture and developing a comprehensive funding strategy, we can ensure that each center receives the resources necessary to provide a safe and supportive environment for our elders.”

Council Delegate Brenda Jesus also raised concerns about transparency and accountability in the expenditure process. She emphasized the need for detailed, community-based expenditure plans that reflect the current and future needs of the Nation’s senior centers.

“Our intent here is to develop a more comprehensive Navajo Nation senior center infrastructure plan. We are focused on working collaboratively for the best interest of our elders and the need for senior centers,” Delegate Jesus said. She emphasized the importance of working closely with the Office of the President and Vice President, and Office of Legislative Counsel to prioritize these projects and ensure they receive the necessary support.

Committee members also expressed concerns regarding project management, with several delegates citing previous challenges faced by the Division of Community Development in overseeing similar infrastructure projects. They called for additional personnel and resources to ensure timely and efficient completion of senior center renovations and upgrades.

Council Delegate Danny Simpson, the sponsor of the legislation, emphasized the importance of careful planning and responsible spending stating, “Our elders are the foundation of our communities, and we owe it to them to ensure that every dollar is spent wisely and that every senior center is equipped to meet both current and future needs.”

The Naabik’íyáti’ Committee voted with 15 in favor and none opposed to unanimously approve Legislation No. 0135-24. The legislation now moves forward to the Navajo Nation Council.

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