



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Law and Order Committee meets with local leadership to discuss public safety infrastructure



Left to Right: LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton, Oljato Chapter official Jean Holiday, and Council Delegate Herman Daniels Jr.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council’s Law and Order Committee(LOC) recently met with the Oljato and Navajo Mountain Chapter Houses to address critical challenges, including the urgent need for modern emergency response facilities, surging construction costs, and significant funding shortfalls.

LOC reiterated the pressing demand for comprehensive public safety facilities in underserved areas such as Oljato and Navajo Mountain. Proposed projects include multipurpose substations equipped with law enforcement offices, holding areas, dormitories for emergency and law enforcement personnel, and spaces for fire and emergency medical services. These facilities are designed to enhance response times and foster safer communities across the Navajo Nation.

Since 2019, the cost of constructing a single substation has escalated sharply—from \$4.1 million to an estimated \$12 million—due to inflation and increased material expenses.

LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton and Council Delegate Herman Daniels Jr. reviewed existing funding sources to fund public safety projects. However, both leaders acknowledged the critical need for funds to meet the Nation’s growing infrastructure demands.

“As a treaty tribe, the federal government has an obligation to uphold its commitments to the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Charles-Newton. “We must remain vigilant in advocating for equitable funding and ensure our priorities are represented in federal budget negotiations.”

The Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC) is one option for advancing these priorities. Alongside 135 other tribes, the Navajo Nation continues to engage with the Department of the Interior and Congress to secure funding for critical public safety and justice initiatives.

To address immediate funding challenges, LOC is exploring the federal 105(L) lease program, which allows tribes to construct facilities and lease them to the federal government under 638 contracts. This program has proven successful for other tribes, such as the Red Lake Nation, and could offer a sustainable model for operations and maintenance on the Navajo Nation.

“The 105(l) program offers a pathway to self-sufficiency,” Chair Charles-Newton stated. “By adopting innovative funding strategies, we can create long-term solutions that benefit our communities.”

The proposed facilities will integrate critical components, including law enforcement offices, holding areas, dormitories for emergency personnel, and dedicated spaces for fire and EMT services. These upgrades are expected to improve response times, reduce staff turnover, and enhance community safety across the Navajo Nation.

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