



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Law and Order Committee postpones public hearing for Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne**



**The Law and Order Committee was forced to postpone their first week of scheduled public hearings for Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne.**

**TUBA CITY, Ariz.** – On Wednesday, The Law and Order Committee (LOC) was forced to postpone their first week of scheduled public hearings for Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne after the Navajo Nation Bar Association (NNBA) failed to submit its required evaluation reports and were not present at the public hearing.

The NNBA's Judicial Evaluation Committee is mandated to submit an assessment of probationary judges and justices, including Chief Justice Jayne, as part of the judicial confirmation process. However, the association did not provide the necessary reports, nor did they attend the scheduled public hearing in Tuba City.

Due to this absence, the LOC has issued a subpoena to the Judicial Evaluation Committee to submit their evaluation and to be present at the upcoming public hearing on March 5 in Crownpoint, N.M.

“These evaluations from the Bar Association are critical for the integrity of these public hearings,” said LOC Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton. “They provide Chief Justice Jayne an opportunity to respond to the evaluation, clarify her performance, and ensure transparency in the judicial review process. Without the NNBA’s participation, we cannot move forward in good faith.”

Under Resolution LOCJY-08-13, the LOC reaffirmed its responsibility to oversee public hearings for the confirmation of judges and justices, a duty previously held by the Judiciary Committee before its dissolution. This process, outlined in 2 N.N.C. §601(B)(3), is designed to ensure that only qualified individuals serve in the Navajo Nation courts, free from political influence.

The NNBA's involvement is essential to this oversight, providing an independent and professional review of judicial performance. The failure of the NNBA to comply with these requirements jeopardizes the fairness and legitimacy of the confirmation process.

As a result of this noncompliance, the LOC has postponed the scheduled hearings in Tuba City, Chinle, and Kayenta. The Committee is committed to rescheduling these hearings once the NNBA fulfills its obligations and ensures its participation in the evaluation process. In the meantime, the public is invited to attend the upcoming hearing in Crownpoint, N.M, on March 5 at 9AM.

"The Law and Order Committee is dedicated to upholding the legal framework that protects the integrity of the Navajo Nation's judiciary," stated Chairwoman Charles-Newton. "We will not allow procedural failures to compromise the fairness and transparency of the confirmation process. We urge the Navajo Nation Bar Association to fulfill its legal responsibilities so that the judicial selection process can proceed as intended."

The LOC remains committed in its obligation to accountability and transparency within the Navajo Nation judicial system. Updates regarding the rescheduled hearings will be provided as soon as they are available.

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