LEGISLATION NO: _0099-20______  SPONSOR: Daniel Tso


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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0099-20

DATE: April 23, 2020

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: APPROVING TEMPORARY AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF NA VAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PURPOSE: The purpose of this legislation is to temporarily amend the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Policies and Procedures to accommodate students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.
PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

24th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Second Year, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

(PRINCE SPONSOR)

TRACKING NO. 0099-20

AN ACTION

RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: APPROVING TEMPORARY AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BE IT ENACTED:

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

A. The Health Education and Human Services Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council and as such, has been delegated authority to promulgate regulations, promote accountability to policies, and provide legislative oversight on matters involving health, social service, education, general governmental services and human services. 2 N.N.C. § 400 (A) and (C)(1).

B. The Health Education and Human Services Committee is specifically empowered to establish Navajo Nation policy [and] promulgate rules and regulations governing education. 2 N.N.C. § 401 (B)(1).

C. Pursuant to Article 27 §89 of the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures, attached as Exhibit A, enacted by ECMY-
28-02, the Health Education and Human Services Committee may amend such Policies and Procedures from time to time.

SECTION TWO. FINDINGS

A. COVID-19 is a dangerous and extremely contagious respiratory virus. The COVID-19 virus is pandemic and is spreading at an alarming rate within the Navajo Nation; as of April 22, 2020, the Navajo Nation has reported 1282 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 49 related deaths.


C. On March 11, 2020, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management, with the concurrence of the President and Vice President of the Navajo Nation, declared a Public Health State of Emergency due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in areas surrounding the Navajo Nation. Acknowledging the establishment of the Health Command Center by the Navajo Nation Department of Health, the Commission stated, “Locally, it is acknowledged and understood that the threat of COVID-19 needs to be mitigated to reduce risk of exposure to the Navajo People and the resultant consequential public health impacts.” CEM-20-03-11, attached as Exhibit B.

D. The Navajo Nation’s declaration of a Public Health State of Emergency due to the outbreak of COVID-19 is still in effect and has not been downgraded.

E. Many students receiving scholarships and financial aid through the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance will be unable to finish the 2020s Spring Semester because of COVID-19 related issues, including, but not limited to college and university shut downs and the students’ abilities to access the technology necessary for on-line courses.

F. In addition, many colleges and universities are not issuing letter grades which is at odds with the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures.
G. For the foregoing reasons, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee of
the Navajo Nation Council finds temporary changes to the Office of Navajo Nation
Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures to
accommodate students affected by circumstances not under their control related to the
COVID-19 pandemics to be in the best interests of Navajo Nation students.

SECTION FOUR. APPROVING TEMPORARY CHANGES TO THE OFFICE OF
NAVAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Health, Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council
hereby temporarily approves the amendments to the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship
and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures as set forth in Exhibit A.

SECTION FIVE. EFFECTIVE DATE; DURATION

A. This Action shall become effective upon certification by the Chairperson of the Health,
   Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.

B. This Action shall expire at the earlier of the rescission of the Public Health State of
   Emergency declaration on the Navajo Nation or the Health, Education and Human
   Services Committee’s approval of permanent amendments to the Office of Navajo
   Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures.