



April 2, 2015

Statement from Speaker LoRenzo Bates Regarding Coal Supply News Article

In today's edition of the Navajo Times an article entitled, "Tribe looking at proposal to sell 700,000 tons of coal" reported that officials with the Office of the Speaker have engaged in discussions with a company to sell our Nation's coal for a proposed "biofuels/diesel fuel project". This news report is entirely inaccurate and misleading.

To date, the Office of the Speaker has not engaged in any discussions or negotiations with any parties regarding this matter, nor have we received any proposals. Additionally, we have not been made aware of any Navajo Nation entity that has plans to pursue such a proposal.

Since the release of the news story, our office has contacted Mark Lewis, who is quoted in the news story. He has confirmed that he did not state that he or any other groups have negotiated with the Office of the Speaker, as reported in the news article.

Mr. Lewis provided the following statement:

"Frontier Applied Sciences PR firm the Water Resource Institute was misquoted in the news story "Tribe looking at proposal to sell 700,000 tons of coal". In no way was the briefing provided to the newspaper intended to single out one Navajo Nation office or person, and the news reports were misquoted by the reporter. "

Furthermore, the article states that the Office of the Speaker did not respond to a request for comment — this is also misleading. My staff was in contact with the news reporter who wrote this particular news article and arranged for an in-person interview; however, the reporter did not show up for the interview at all. The Office of the Speaker has issued a request to have the story retracted.

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LoRenzo Bates, Speaker
23rd Navajo Nation Council