



# 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2015

## MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin (928) 221-9253  
Jolene Holgate (928) 380-4174  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **New Mexico Committee on Compacts approves Gaming Compact**

*Compact to be considered by the New Mexico House and Senate*

**SANTA FE, N.M.** – New Mexico’s Committee on Compacts on Saturday evening voted 15-1 in support of the Navajo Nation’s proposed Gaming Compact with no amendments.

The current Compact, which the Nation signed onto in 2003, is set to expire on June 30. Along with the Navajo Nation, the Jicarilla Apache Nation, Mescalero Apache Nation, Pueblo of Acoma, and Pueblo of Jemez are also included as part of the proposed Compact.

During his testimony, Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) emphasized that the four other tribes and the Office of the Governor stand united with the Navajo Nation in support of the proposed Compact.

“Together, we have produced a Gaming Compact that is fair, reasonable and will continue to benefit all of us in the form of jobs and revenue for the tribes and state,” said Speaker Bates.

Speaker Bates was joined by Council Delegates Tom Chee, Tuchoney Slim, Jr., Jonathan Nez, Mel R. Begay, Leonard Tsosie, Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Seth Damon, Norman M. Begay, Otto Tso, and Benjamin Bennett.

Delegate Tsosie and Delegate Nez also testified in support of the proposed Compact and urged the committee to forward the Compact to the Legislature with no amendments.

“While this Compact is limited to the State of New Mexico, it does not mean that for the Navajo Nation it will not impact our Navajo people and the entire Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Nez.

The revenue sharing formula outlined within the proposed compact shows that revenue from the Navajo Nation to the State would escalate from eight-percent to nine-percent and to 10.75% over the duration of the 23-year compact which would expire on June 30, 2037.

Currently, the Navajo Nation operates two Class III gaming facilities in the State of New Mexico. The proposed Compact would allow for the tribe’s only Class II facility, Flowing Water Navajo Casino, to become a Class III facility and also allow for a fourth Class III facility to be established.

In 2014, the Navajo Nation’s three gaming facilities generated nearly \$80 million, while providing approximately 755 jobs and contributed approximately \$6.3 million to the State of New Mexico through revenue sharing.

“As Speaker of the Navajo Nation, it is my responsibility and duty to ensure that the Navajo Nation’s economic development and future prosperity is protected,” added Speaker Bates.

The Navajo Nation previously negotiated a Gaming Compact with the Governor in 2013 which was not brought to the Senate floor for consideration by the New Mexico State Legislature and again during the 2014 session, in which the compact did not receive enough supporting votes in the State Senate.

The Committee on Compacts has the authority to review the Compact as required by the New Mexico Compact Negotiations Act.

On Saturday, the committee considered and voted down six proposed amendments. If amendments had been approved, each would have been sent back to the Office of the Governor and the Navajo Nation for approval, disapproval or re-negotiations.

The Compact will now be forwarded first to the New Mexico Senate and if approved to the House for consideration. The Legislature, however, cannot offer any further amendments.

If approved by the State, the compact will then be submitted to the U.S. Department of the Interior for final approval, as required by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. DOI will then have 45 days to approve or disapprove. If no action is taken, the Compact will be deemed approved on the 46th day.

# # #

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org) or find us on Facebook and Twitter, search for keywords: Navajo Nation Council