



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Special Session to be held to consider Navajo Nation's Fiscal Year 2016 Comprehensive Budget

WINDOW ROCK – Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who is currently serving as Speaker Pro Tem, announced that a special session will be held on Sept. 22 to consider the Navajo Nation's proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Comprehensive Budget.

A petition to hold the special session has obtained the required 13 signatures to call the special session, in accordance with 2 N.N.C. §162.

Council met for three days last week to consider the proposed budget, which did not garner enough votes to pass. Over the course of the session, Council members debated numerous amendments based on the Nation's funding needs to ensure that programs are funded to continue serving the Navajo people.

"My Council colleagues advocated for specific areas of need such as the Head Start program, veteran services, judicial services, and many others—needs that have been conveyed by constituents and programs through the course of weeks of budget hearings dating back to August," stated Speaker Pro Tem Yazzie.

In addition to funding needs, the Council must also take into consideration the Nation's annual projected revenue, which is expected to be reduced by millions based on the decline in oil prices that are expected to impact the Nation's royalties from its oil resources.

On Sept. 15, the Office of the President and Vice President issued a press release indicating that the Council attempted to utilize the Nation's Permanent Trust Fund set aside funding during last week's budget session. Speaker Pro Tem Yazzie explained that the intent was to use the funds, as the Council did in 2008, to compensate for the budget deficit.

"There are many factors that must be weighed when considering budget for the Navajo Nation and I commend my colleagues for the thoughtful discussions that were grounded in the opportunity to address the needs of our communities," added Speaker Pro Tem Yazzie.

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