



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Budget and Finance Committee approves supplemental funding for the Diné Bii Association for Disabled Citizens, Inc.**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Tuesday, the Budget and Finance Committee considered Legislation No. 0229-16, in which the Diné Bii Association for Disabled Citizens, Inc. is seeking supplemental funding in the amount of approximately \$400,000 in the form of a grant from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance.

According to the legislation, the grant proposal is requesting an allocation for the DADCI program to continue homecare community-based habilitation services, improved transportation, and homecare supplies for Navajo citizens with developmental disabilities.

The grant proposal also states that the organization receives operation funding from the Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disability for habilitation services, and through a P.L. 93-638 contract from the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services for room and board for disabled individuals requiring daily care.

The DADCI is a private non-profit organization that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities with varying levels of severity ranging from infant to adulthood, and offers Individual Service Plans based on the needs of the person with disabilities. Programs offered are Habilitation in a Residential Setting, Day Treatment and Training, Home Community-Based Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services in Tuba City, Kayenta, and Pinõn.

BFC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) said he supports the efforts of the DADCI and the legislation, but urged the organization to increase pressure on the federal funding agencies to provide additional funding.

“We need find a way to get federal entities to cough up more money. We need to put a plan together to fight for these monies because I know we can do better. The easy money to get is the UUFB, but the bigger money is with the AZ DES/DDD and P.L. 93-638 funds,” said Delegate Tsosie. “We have a growing disabled population and we need to find a way to take care of all of them.”

He reminded committee members that the supplemental funding is only a one-time funding grant, and recommended that the NNDSS work with the DADCI to request additional funding from

the P.L. 93-638 contract and the state of Arizona as recurring funds to ensure improved consistent services for Navajo citizens with disabilities.

BFC member Council Delegate Tom Chee (Shiprock) asked if it were possible to utilize funds from the Navajo Nation Handicap Services Trust Fund, which currently has approximately \$11.8 million, along with state and federal funding.

“How can we use the trust fund to get the funds to the DADCI as soon as possible? How much money can be used from the trust fund, and what are the stipulations on it? I am thinking of a long-term solution for the disbursement of the trust fund because I do support what’s before us,” said Delegate Chee.

He added that the well being of Navajo citizens with special needs is a paramount issue and the Navajo Nation will need to begin devising ways to aid the DADCI to garner access to funding to advance services for individuals with disabilities.

BFC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0229-16, which moves forward to the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee for consideration. The Navajo Nation Council serves as the final authority on the bill.

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