



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Special Session to be held to consider amending the Navajo Nation Land Policy on Acquisition of Land

WINDOW ROCK – The Navajo Nation Council is scheduled to convene in a special session at 1:00 p.m. on August 2 in the Council Chamber in Window Rock to consider Legislation No. 0101-16, which seeks to amend the Navajo Land Policy on Acquisition of Land, the Land Acquisition Fund, and enact the Navajo Nation Land Acquisition Act.

“We welcome all our Diné Citizens to attend Tuesday’s special session or to view online as we address the land acquisition issues and concerns that impact our people and communities,” stated Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland).

The legislation sponsored by Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) was referred to the Resources and Development Committee by the Council during the Summer Session in July.

The Navajo Land Policy on Acquisition of Land was created in 1954 and gives authority for the RDC to formulate a land acquisition program, develop code of use for land acquired, and established areas to be given priority attention. Under the land acquisition process, the Council and the Bureau of Indian Affairs would consider all appraisals for final approval, which are then considered by the President.

The proposed legislation would delegate the authority to acquire lands to the director of the Navajo Division of Natural Resources.

On July 20, Council approved an amendment to the legislation to limit the Navajo Division of Natural Resources executive director’s authority to acquire land based on the cost of the land. The NDNR executive director would not exceed an accumulated sum of \$5 million per calendar year and RDC would grant final approval for acquisition or disposition of real property between the sum of \$5 to \$20 million per calendar year.

The Naabik’íyáti’ Committee would grant final approval for acquisition or disposition of real property exceeding \$20 million per calendar year. The NDNR executive director would report to RDC and the Office of the President no later than March and September of each year on all land acquisition activities.

According to the legislation, Navajo Nation Code Title 16 will be amended to enact the Navajo Nation Acquisition of Lands Acts. The Act will establish the authority for the Nation to acquire and dispose of real property. It also removes processes and negotiation limits that is no longer used in the real estate market and it removes limitations on the types of lands that be acquired to include any real property.

On July 26, RDC considered the legislation and approved the legislation with a 4-0 vote.

The Office of the Speaker and Navajo Nation Office of Broadcast Services will once again partner to live stream the session via the Council's designated Ustream channel. To view live proceedings during Tuesday's session, please visit [ustream.tv](https://www.ustream.tv) and search for "Navajo Nation Council" in the search box. The proposed agenda for the special session is available at navajonationcouncil.org.

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