



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 15, 2016

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### **Navajo Nation Council continues to advocate for funding through New Mexico legislative bills**

**SANTA FE, N.M.** – With the New Mexico State Legislature set to end its 30-day legislative session on Feb. 18, members of the Navajo Nation Council continue to advocate through meetings, letters, and other correspondence for several legislative bills that would provide funding for New Mexico chapters for projects ranging from the construction of parking lots, senior centers, water lines, and others.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and other Council members have met with top state officials on several occasions, to advocate for the approval of the funds and to ensure that 13 current projects are reauthorized to allow additional time to complete construction of the projects.

“I thank my Council colleagues for their continued support and efforts at the state level and we want to assure our chapters that we will continue to monitor and advocate for funding that benefits many Navajo communities,” said Speaker Bates.

On Feb. 5, Council Delegates Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Leonard Tsosie, Benjamin Bennett, Tuchoney Slim, Jr., Seth Damon, and Norman M. Begay met with state representatives, senators, and Gov. Martinez at the state capitol to push for the approval of funding and to address several legislations that may impact the Navajo Nation.

Currently, there are three separate legislations making their way through the legislature that address capital outlay funding, general obligation bond projects, and the reauthorization of current capital outlay projects.

H.B. 219 identifies approximately \$3.7 million for capital outlay projects for Navajo chapters throughout the state. The House Ways and Means Committee approved the bill on Feb. 13, which will now go to the House and Senate for consideration, then to Gov. Susana Martinez.

The full Senate passed S.B. 122 on Feb. 12, which is the General Obligation Bond Projects that includes funding for tribal colleges and funding for senior center improvements at four locations on the Navajo Nation. If the House passes the bill and is signed by Gov. Martinez, voters will decide on the measure through a public referendum in the 2016 General Election.

The Senate also passed S.B. 172 on Feb. 14, which is a bill that requests the reauthorization of capital outlay projects throughout the state, with 13 locations on the Navajo Nation. The bill must also be approved the House and signed by Gov. Martinez.

“With only a few days left in the legislative session, we understand that many things can happen and therefore we will continue our lobbying efforts and monitoring of these and other bills that impact the Navajo Nation,” added Speaker Bates.

Speaker Bates also thanked state senators and representatives for their continued advocacy and staff with the Office of the President and Vice President for updating and compiling information to assist lobbying efforts.

“We are very thankful for the efforts of our leadership at the state level and we appreciate their continued support of the Navajo Nation,” Speaker Bates stated.

Gov. Martinez will have 20 days to consider any bills that require her signature that are passed by the legislature during the last three days of the legislative session. All bills that are not signed by Gov. Martinez by March 9 will be pocket-vetoed and not become law. The 30-day session will officially end at noon on Feb. 18.

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