



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 23, 2016

MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin (928) 221-9253
Jolene Holgate (928) 380-4174
Crystalyne Curley (928) 286-7918
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives report regarding Navajo-owned non-emergency medical transport businesses

KAYENTA, Ariz. – On Monday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report from Sacred Mountain Medical Transport, a Navajo-owned company that provides non-emergency medical transport for Navajo Nation citizens from their home to health care clinics and hospitals.

Chief operating officer Jacob Brock provided the report to HEHSC members, and said his company has encountered challenges with providing adequate services due to competition and the lack of regulation of non-Navajo-owned transport companies operating on Navajo land.

Brock said he would like to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Navajo Nation to begin the process of being designated as a preferred transport business.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) said the committee has begun looking into drafting legislation to begin regulating non-emergency medical transport companies on the Navajo Nation due to complaints from Navajo citizens regarding the lack of safety and basic medical training that some transportation businesses do not have.

“I would recommend that [Mr. Brock] send us a one-page written document acknowledging the relationship you have with public safety and your compliance with business regulatory on the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Hale. “Send us language to include in the legislation and we will push this through [the Navajo Nation] Council.”

Delegate Hale added that it is time that Navajo Nation begins regulating the transport companies and proposed that there would only be 10 Navajo-owned transport businesses that will serve the Nation. Currently, there are over 200 different transport companies that operate on Navajo land and do not have the same credentials as Sacred Mountain Medical Transport.

Brock said his non-emergency medical transport company currently works with Navajo public safety entities, drivers are trained in CPR and First Aid, have the required insurance requirements, and they are able to provide transportation off the Nation to larger health care facilities in areas such as Flagstaff and Phoenix.

Delegate Hale said the committee would like to develop a regulatory plan that mirrors what the White Mountain Apache Tribe has implemented, which allows only 10 transport companies on their land and the companies would pay approximately \$3,000-\$10,000 a month to the Navajo Nation to improve other areas of health care for Navajo citizens.

“The Navajo Nation is a sovereign entity and we allow these services to take place, and it is important that our Navajo people feel safe when utilizing these companies, and at the same time it will benefit Navajo business owners financially and to give back to their communities,” said Delegate Hale.

Delegate Hale recommended that after the committee receives the written document with suggested legislation language from Brock, they would hold a work session to begin devising a regulatory plan for non-emergency medical transport companies operating on the Navajo Nation.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org or find us on Facebook and Twitter, keywords: Navajo Nation Council