



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee supports amendments for the Navajo Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

TSE BONITO, NM – Last Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0402-16, which approves the Navajo Housing Authority Reform Act by approving amendments to Title 6 subsection 605, 606, and 618 of the Navajo Nation Code, in regards to the NHA Board of Commissioners.

RDC chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat), who sponsored the legislation, stated that the purpose of the legislation is to aid the direction of NHA with the guidance of a professional NHA Board of Commissioners.

“The purpose of the legislation is to change the qualification criteria for the NHA Board of Commissioners, to lower the number of commissioners from eight to five, to create a new formation of a nomination committee for commissioners, and confirmation of commissioners by the RDC. The new standards will direct NHA forward. We need professional educated commissioners,” stated Delegate Shepherd.

The legislation states the NHA commissioners should consist of five members with post-high school education and with knowledge of finance, engineering, and housing issues. The commissioners will be selected by the Navajo Nation President, Navajo Nation Council Speaker, and Chief Executive Officer of NHA and confirmed by the RDC.

RDC member Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) expressed his concerns regarding the proposed changes.

“I support this legislation to an extent. First, are the current NHA commissioners aware of the proposed amendments and have they provided any recommendations? Personally, I think this might be a good idea because I only see four commissioners as knowledgeable and they do a great job and the rest of the commissioners don’t do as much work,” stated Delegate Filfred.

“Last week, a public hearing was conducted regarding NHA and it concentrated on the Tribally Designated Housing Entity. Two legislations were introduced regarding NHA and are the legislations proposing two different plans for NHA? Why are we pushing two plans for NHA at once?” asked RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle).

According to Delegate Shepherd, the TDHE is a separate issue from the legislation. The legislation will serve as a guiding tool for NHA and it will allow strategic planning and “sense of direction,” added Delegate Shepherd.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0402-16 with a 3-1 vote. Navajo Nation Council will serve as the final authority for the bill.

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