

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: _0113-20__

SPONSOR: Thomas Walker, Jr.

TITLE: An Act Relating to Law and Order Committee, Naabik'iyáti' Committee and the Navajo Nation Council; Enacting 17 N.N.C. § 338 Excessive Pricing during a Declared State of Emergency

Date posted: May 7, 2020 at 5:05PM

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0113-20

DATE: April 30, 2020

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION; AN ACT RELATING TO LAW AND ORDER COMMITTEE, NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE AND THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; ENACTING 17 N.N.C. § 338 EXCESSIVE PRICING DURING A DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY

PURPOSE: The purpose of this legislation is to enact 17 N.N.C. § Excessive Pricing During a Declared State of Emergency. The description of the offense is stated as:

Upon declaration of a state of emergency by the President of the Navajo Nation, and for 30 days after the cessation of the state of emergency, it is unlawful for any person to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly sell or rent any commodity or rental facility to any person at a price greater than ten percent (10%) above the average price of the same commodity or rental facility for the thirty days immediately preceding the declaration of a state of emergency.

This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL, HOLD PERIOD: None
Website Posting Time/Date: _____
Posting End Date: 05-12-20
Eligible for Action: 05-13-20

Law & Order Committee
Thence
Naabik'iyáti' Committee
Thence
Navajo Nation Council

PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION
24th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Second Year, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

(Prime Sponsor)

TRACKING NO. 0113-20



AN ACT

RELATING TO LAW AND ORDER COMMITTEE, NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE
AND THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; ENACTING 17 N.N.C. § 338 EXCESSIVE
PRICING DURING A DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY

BE IT ENACTED:

Section One. Authority

- A. The Navajo Nation Council is the governing of body of the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. § 102(A).
- B. The Navajo Nation Council approves enactments or amendments of positive law. 2 N.N.C. § 164 (A).
- C. The Law and Order Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council. 2 N.N.C. § 600 (A).
- D. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §164(A)(9), "a proposed resolution that requires final action by the Navajo Nation Council [must] be assigned to standing committee(s) having authority over the subject matter at issue and the Naabik'iyáti Committee."

Section Two. Findings

- 1 A. The Navajo Nation President issued Executive Order 001-20 declaring a state of
2 emergency due to COVID-19 on March 13, 2020.
- 3 B. On March 11, 2020, the Emergency Management Commission declared a state
4 of emergency due to COVID-19. CEM-20-03-11.
- 5 C. The Navajo Nation Council finds that price gouging at a time of the declared
6 COVID-19 emergency excessively burdens the public in obtaining needed
7 disaster relief necessities such as food, protective personal equipment,
8 disinfectant supplies and other supplies.
- 9

10 **Section Three. Enacting Title 17 Section 338, The Excessive Pricing During A**
11 **Declared State Of Emergency**

12 The Navajo Nation enacts 17 N.N.C. § 338 as follows:

13

14 **NAVAJO NATION CODE ANNOTATED**
15 **TITLE 17. LAW AND ORDER**
16 **CHAPTER 3. OFFENSES**
17 **SUBCHAPTER 4. THEFT AND RELATED OFFENSES**

18 ****

19 **§338. Excessive pricing during a declared state of emergency**

- 20 A. Definitions. The following definitions are applicable in this Section.
- 21 1. “Average Price” means the average price at which the same or similar
22 commodity was obtainable within the Navajo Nation and border towns during the
23 last 30 days immediately prior to the declared state of emergency.
- 24 2. “Commodity” means any goods, services, materials, merchandise, supplies,
25 equipment, resources, or other articles of commerce, and includes without
26 imitation all services offered or provided or work performed or offered to be
27 performed as an occupation or business to consumers and food, water, ice,
28 pharmaceuticals, emergency supplies, chemicals, household building materials,
29 and fuel necessary for consumption or use as a direct result of the emergency.
- 30

- 1 3. “Excessive price” means a price for a commodity or rental facility that exceeds
2 by more than 10% the average price charged for that commodity or rental facility
3 in the 30-day period immediately preceding declaration of a state of emergency.
4 4. “Person” shall include, but not be limited to, natural persons, corporations,
5 partnerships, incorporated or unincorporated associations, and any other legal
6 entity.
7 5. “Rental Facility” shall include, but not be limited to, any hotel, motel, boarding
8 house, dwelling house, and self-storage facility offered for rent or lease.

9 B. Offense

- 10 1. Upon declaration of a state of emergency by the President of the Navajo Nation,
11 and for 30 days after the cessation of the state of emergency, it is unlawful for
12 any person to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly sell or rent any commodity
13 or rental facility to any person at a price greater than ten percent (10%) above the
14 average price of the same commodity or rental facility for the thirty days
15 immediately preceding the declaration of a state of emergency.
16 2. Each instance of charging an excessive price under this Section constitutes a
17 separate violation. Lack of notice or failure to receive notice of the declaration
18 of a state of emergency shall not be a defense with respect to any violation of this
19 Section.

20 C. Defenses

21 It is a defense if the increase in price is substantially attributable to additional costs
22 that arose within the chain of distribution in connection with the sale of the
23 commodity or rental facility, and:

- 24 1. The price for the commodity or rental facility does not exceed 10% above the
25 cost of obtaining the commodity or rental facility; and,
26 2. The price for the commodity or rental facility does not exceed 10% above the
27 person’s customary markup.

28 D. Penalties

- 29 1. Any person convicted of violating this Section shall be ordered to pay a fine of
30 not less than five hundred (\$500.00) dollars per offense.

1 2. Upon a showing of continuous and knowing or intentional violations, the Court
2 shall sentence the offender:

3 a. To serve a term of not less than 30 days in jail. A court shall not grant
4 probation, pardon, parole, commutation, or suspension of sentence or release
5 on any other basis; and

6 b. To pay a fine of not less than two thousand five hundred (\$2,500) nor more
7 than five thousand (\$5,000.00) dollars; and

8 c. Order the revocation of any license or certificate authorizing the offender to
9 engage in business within the Navajo Nation.

10 E. Restitution

11 For any violation of this Section, and in addition to the sentence, the Court shall
12 require the offender to pay actual damages or nályééh to the injured party.

14 **Section Four. Codification**

15 The amendments which amend or adopt new sections of the Navajo Nation
16 Code shall be codified by the Office of Legislative Counsel. The Office of
17 Legislative Counsel shall incorporate such amended provisions in the next
18 codification of the Navajo Nation Code.

20 **Section Five. Savings Clause**

21 Should any provision of the amendments enacted herein be determined invalid
22 by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court or the District Courts of the Navajo Nation,
23 without appeal to the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, the remainder of the
24 amendments shall remain the law of the Navajo Nation.

26 **Section Six. Effective Date**

27 Amendments enacted herein shall be effective pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 221 (B).