



April 17 Special Session to include action on burial assistance, public safety, donations

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — A Special Session of the 24th Navajo Nation Council will be held after a petition that was circulated among council delegates gained the necessary signatures following the Apr. 10 session. The 24th Navajo Nation Council will consider emergency legislation at its Apr. 16, 2020 Special Session that relates to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Continuing under old business, Legislation No. 0079-20 will be considered by the Council that, if approved, will allocate \$250,000 for burial assistance to the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services. That legislation, sponsored by Hon. Eugenia Charles-Newton and co-sponsored by Hon. Otto Tso, was tabled at the Apr. 10 session with one approved amendment. That amendment would also require the Division of Social Services to submit any expenditures to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for reimbursement.

The Council will consider new business item Legislation No. 0081-20, a supplemental appropriation to the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety in the amount of \$2,416,747. That legislation, sponsored by Hon. Eugenia Charles-Newton and co-sponsored by both Hon. Jamie Henio and Hon. Otto Tso, would appropriate funds from the excess balance of the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFB), if approved.

Legislation No. 0084-20, sponsored by Speaker Seth Damon, will establish the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Response Donation Fund, if approved. The legislation builds on earlier action by Council that shortened the process for accepting donations for the Navajo Nation's COVID-19 relief efforts. It would establish a specific COVID-19 response donation fund within the Navajo Department of Health to ensure financial donations are expended only for coronavirus-related efforts. The legislation would also ensure the statutory diversions of revenue percentages into various Navajo Nation funds are waived for coronavirus response donations.

Additionally, Council will consider new items regarding communications, supply and media funding, teleconferencing provisions for Diné College and Navajo Technical University boards of regents, and temporary authorizations for the two educational institutions to apply for access to the 2.5 GHz band of radio frequencies controlled by the Federal Communications Commission. A legislation was also approved to be considered at the Special Session to cancel the forthcoming Spring Session planned for Monday.

The Special Session will be facilitated at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber and will be closed to the general public under the existing public health orders. The session will be streamed online through Vimeo (www.vimeo.com/navajonationcouncil), Youtube (www.youtube.com/navajonationcouncil) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/navajonationcouncil). More information, including links to the Navajo Nation Council's online video streaming services, can be found at www.navajonationcouncil.org.

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