



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Law and Order Committee requests police substation for Nahata Dziil community**

**NAHATA DZIIL, Ariz.** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received reports from the Nahata Dziil Commission Governance, Office of Navajo-Hopi Indian Relocation executive director Christopher Bavasi, Sanders Valley High School dean of students Teddy Goodluck, and community members regarding public safety concerns within the community of Nahata Dziil, also known as “New Lands”, located along Interstate 40 approximately 50-miles southwest of Window Rock.

The reports described how the interstate highway that travels near the community contributes to the high volume of crime and drug trafficking within Nahata Dziil and surrounding communities.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who represents the community, has been a strong advocate for establishing a police sub-station district within the community. He stated that community leadership and members has repeatedly pled for more police presence in the community for many years.

“The community’s concerns has been ongoing issue for many years. They question when they will receive public safety services and protection,” said Delegate Smith. “Community members of Nahata Dziil are in a unique situation because they are relocated families and they were promised many services, which were never provided.”

In 1974, hundreds of Navajo people were relocated resulting from the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act of 1974. In the early 1980’s, the federal government bought several ranches surrounding the town of Sanders, which were turned into trust land for Navajo families to reside.

Nahata Dziil Commission Governance president Darrel Tso, said the community has a police sub-station facility that is ready to be occupied.

In the 1980s, the Office of the Navajo and Hopi Relocation also funded and built homes, school facilities, a health clinic, and police sub-station for relocatees.

LOC member Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi) questioned why the police sub-station was not used for its intended purpose and if the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety has any plans to utilize the building.

“I have not seen any plans from Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety to use the police substation facility. If the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety is not going to use the building, the Office of the Navajo and Hopi Relocation should take the position to provide public safety for community members because the office is entitled to provide services for the relocatees,” said Delegate Tso.

At the end of the discussion, LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) recommended to meet with the Office of the Navajo and Hopi Relocation, Apache County Sheriff Joseph Dedman, Jr., and NN DPS to discuss the plans of the Nahata Dziil police sub-station.

The Law and Order Committee approved the reports with a 2-0 vote.

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