



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 11, 2017

MEDIA CONTACTS

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

Naabik'iyáti' Committee issues support for FY2018 Comprehensive Budget

WINDOW ROCK – During a special meeting of the Naabik'iyáti' Committee held on Monday, committee members voted 12-1 in support of Legislation No. 0345-17, which seeks the approval of the Navajo Nation's fiscal year 2018 Comprehensive Budget by the Navajo Nation Council.

Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh), who is the sponsor of the legislation, thanked his colleagues for their time and diligence in holding oversight budget hearings the last several weeks and for putting forth the recommended budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which will begin on Oct. 1.

Delegate Damon also chairs the Budget and Finance Committee, which is tasked with recommending the Comprehensive Budget to the Navajo Nation Council each year. He explained that the proposed operating budget for FY2018 totals over \$636 million, which includes General Funds, Indirect Cost funding, higher education set aside funds, personnel savings, proprietary fund, fiduciary funds, special revenue internal funds, and special revenue external funds.

According to the legislation, the Legislative Branch would receive over \$15 million, the Judicial Branch would receive nearly \$15 million, and the Executive Branch would receive over \$578 million. In addition, the legislation would allow each branch of government to carryover certain amounts of unexpended funding from the current year's budget for specific purposes.

The budget bill currently includes a total of five Conditions or Appropriations issued to certain divisions, departments, and standing committees, which are intended to hold staff and offices accountability to meeting certain goals and deadlines as part of the entire budget.

During Monday's discussion, Naabik'iyáti' Committee members approved three amendments including one proposed by Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat), which changes language in the bill to include the budget for the Division of Natural Resources as part of the overall Comprehensive Budget. The amendment was passed with a vote of 15-3.

Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) also issued an amendment to include a listing of unmet needs for the Judicial Branch that was presented during Monday's meeting by acting Chief Justice Thomas J. Holgate. The unmet needs listing totals approximately \$426,000 for judicial districts, probation

services, Judicial Conduct Commission, Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Supreme Court. Committee members approved the amendment with a vote of 13-0.

The third amendment, proposed by Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill), amends language in the bill to increase the carryover amount allowed for the Judicial Branch for next year's budget to help the branch meet their unmet needs. The amendment was approved by a vote of 13-0.

At the conclusion of Monday's discussion, the Naabik'iyáti' Committee approved Legislation No. 0345-17 by a vote of 12-1. The Navajo Nation Council will consider the bill during this week's Comprehensive Budget session, which is scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m. at the Department of Diné Education auditorium in Window Rock on Tuesday.

The Comprehensive Budget will require two-thirds approval, or 16 supporting votes, to pass and will be subject to consideration by the President of the Navajo Nation.

###

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