



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

MEDIA CONTACTS

Alray Nelson, Communications Director
Kyrion Hardy, Public Information Officer
Koltion Nephew, Legislative Staff Writer
E-mail: nnlb.communications@gmail.com
Phone: (928) 530-8329

Speaker Seth Damon sponsors Bill Allocating \$1.8 Million for Election Administration & Navajo Nation Judicial Branch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2021



PHOTO: Speaker Seth Damon, of the 24th Navajo Nation Council commemorates Navajo Code Talker Day.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Last Friday, Speaker Seth Damon of the 24th Navajo Nation Council sponsored Legislation No. 0190-21 that will allocate over \$1.8 million dollars from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFb) to address unmet needs for the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch and Navajo Election Administration for Fiscal Year 2022.

“When we met with the President and Chief Justice during a Three Branch Chiefs meeting in June, we agreed that it would be in the best interest of the Navajo Nation that unmet needs be funded through a UUFb appropriation. There should be no reduction of a branch’s budget allocation or any cutting of services because of this bill,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Łichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh).

Supplemental funding amounts include \$1,244,915.00 for the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch to cover shortfalls for operation costs impacted by the pandemic and to process district court cases promptly. Judicial personnel plan for offices to open safely in 2022.

\$600,000.00 will be provided to the Navajo Election Administration to plan, prepare, and coordinate the 2021 Chapter Primary Election. This includes funding for voter education materials, poll site operations at 110 chapters, and personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

“The full operation of our courts and the Judicial Branch is an important public service to the Navajo people,” said Speaker Damon. “We are exercising our fiscal responsibility under the law. There is a legal obligation for the Legislative Branch to expend funds for upcoming elections and to maintain the health and safety of our poll workers.”

The Navajo Nation Supreme Court stated in the case, *Tsosie v. Navajo Board of Election Supervisors*, that the Election Code itself mandates the expenditure of funds necessary to the operation of the Election Code. If approved, Legislation No. 0190-21 proceeds to the Law and Order, Budget and Finance, and Naabik’iyáti’ Committees — before the Navajo Nation Council for consideration.

###