

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: _0218-21_

SPONSOR: Raymond Smith, Jr.

TITLE: An Action Relating to the Resources and Development, Budget and Finance, and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Requests the U.S. Congress and U.S. President to Approve Additional Federal Funds for Navajo Water Projects Throughout the Navajo Nation for the Benefit of the Navajo people, Navajo Chapters, Navajo Communities, and all Persons residing Within the Boundaries of the Navajo Nation

Date posted: October 25, 2021 at 4:47PM

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0218-21

DATE: October 25, 2021

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT, BUDGET AND FINANCE, AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; REQUESTS THE U.S. CONGRESS AND U.S. PRESIDENT TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS FOR NAVAJO WATER PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE NAVAJO NATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NAVAJO PEOPLE, NAVAJO CHAPTERS, NAVAJO COMMUNITIES, AND ALL PERSONS RESIDING WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NAVAJO NATION

PURPOSE: The purpose of this legislation to request the U.S. Congress and the U.S. President to approve additional federal funds for Navajo water projects throughout the Navajo Nation for the benefit of the Navajo people, Navajo chapters, Navajo communities, and all persons residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

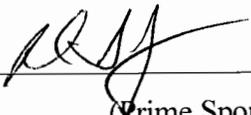
This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD: YBRUDMWSL
Website Posting Time/Date:
Posting End Date: OCTOBER 30, 2021
Eligible for Action: OCTOBER 31, 2021

Resources & Development Committee
Thence
Budget & Finance Committee
Thence
Naabik'iyáti' Committee

1 PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
2 24th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Third Year, 2021

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 
5 _____
6 (Prime Sponsor)

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8 TRACKING NO. 0218-21

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10 AN ACTION
11 RELATING TO THE RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT, BUDGET AND
12 FINANCE, AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; REQUESTS THE U.S.
13 CONGRESS AND U.S. PRESIDENT TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL FEDERAL
14 FUNDS FOR NAVAJO WATER PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE NAVAJO
15 NATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NAVAJO PEOPLE, NAVAJO CHAPTERS,
16 NAVAJO COMMUNITIES, AND ALL PERSONS RESIDING WITHIN THE
17 BOUNDARIES OF THE NAVAJO NATION

18
19 **BE IT ENACTED:**

20 **SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY**

- 21 A. The Naabik'iyáti' Committee is established as a Navajo Nation Council standing
22 committee with authority to review and continually monitor the programs and activities
23 of federal and state departments and to assist development of such programs designed
24 to serve the Navajo People and the Navajo Nation through intergovernmental
25 relationships between the Navajo Nation and such departments. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164
26 (A)(9), 700 (A), 701 (A)(7).
- 27 B. The Resources and Development Committee is standing committees of the Navajo
28 Nation Council with the authority to oversee all matters involving water, land, the
29 environment, community development, and public utilities, among others. 2 N.N.C.
30 §500(A) and (C).

1 C. The Budget and Finance Committee is standing committees of the Navajo Nation
2 Council with the responsibility to “review and recommend to the Navajo Nation Council
3 the budgeting, appropriation, investment and management of all funds.” 2 N.N.C. §
4 300(A).

5
6 **SECTION TWO. FINDINGS**

7 A. The Navajo Nation encompasses more than 27,000 square miles in the Southwest
8 within portions of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. According to the US Census
9 2010, the Navajo Nation population within the Navajo Indian Reservation is 173,667
10 and the total Navajo Nation population is 332,129.

11 B. The Navajo Nation lacks infrastructure, economic development and sustained
12 poverty are closely connected. Throughout the Navajo Nation, reliable water
13 supplies are essential for the Navajo people, communities, and starting and sustaining
14 economic development. Navajo water projects provide communities with the ability
15 to plan and provide for basic needs economic development, and more reliable water
16 supplies.

17 C. The Navajo Nation has severe water infrastructure deficiencies that impact the health,
18 economy, and welfare of the Navajo people and all people residing within the
19 boundaries of the Navajo Nation. The lack of adequate domestic and municipal water
20 is one of the greatest water resource problems facing the Navajo Nation. Given the
21 limited Navajo Nation resources, and the limited federal budgets and authorizations,
22 the water resource problems will become increasingly acute, intensifying the poor
23 socioeconomic conditions on the Navajo reservation.

24 D. In recognition of Tó’ée’iiná (water is life), the Navajo Nation Council has determined
25 that water is essential “to provide for a permanent homeland for the Navajo people.”
26 22 N.N.C. §1101.

27 E. The Navajo Nation expends millions in Navajo Nation funds (Navajo Nation General
28 Funds, Navajo Nation Undesignated Unreserved Funds, Sihasin Funds, other Navajo
29 Nation funding sources, etc.), requests State funds (capital improvement projects,
30 state matching funds, etc.), and requests Federal funds in order for the Navajo Nation

1 to provide water to the Navajo people, Navajo Chapters, Navajo communities, and
2 all people residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation. The following
3 federal agencies and departments are federal agencies that the Navajo Nation has
4 requested funds from:

- 5 a. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- 6 b. USDA Rural Development
- 7 c. Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce
- 8 d. National Rural Water Association
- 9 e. Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP)
- 10 f. CoBank
- 11 g. HUD Southwest Office of Native American
- 12 h. Indian Health Service
- 13 i. US Department of the Interior - Bureau of Reclamation

14 See, *Navajo Nation Water and Wastewater Funding Sources Compiled by the*
15 *Environmental Finance Center Network, June 2019* attached as **Exhibit A**.

- 16 F. In June 2020, the Navajo Nation received \$714,189,631 from the U.S. Department of
17 the Treasury. The funds are part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic
18 Stimulus (CARES) Act payments to state, local and tribal governments approved
19 April 27, 2020 by Congress and President Donald Trump. The Navajo Nation used
20 CARES funding for infrastructure development which included water projects.
- 21 G. In May 2021, the Navajo Nation received approximately \$1.86 billion American
22 Rescue Plan of 2021. The Navajo Nation has received approximately \$1.86 billion
23 under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to further recovery from the
24 coronavirus pandemic under the American Rescue Plan of 2021. The Navajo Nation
25 plans to use the ARPA funds for infrastructure development, which includes water
26 projects.
- 27 H. It is in the best interest of the Navajo Nation to request the U.S. Congress and U.S.
28 President to approve additional federal funds for Navajo water projects throughout
29 the Navajo Nation for the benefit of the Navajo people, Navajo chapters, Navajo
30 communities, and all persons residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

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**SECTION FOUR. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS FOR NAVAJO
NATION WATER PROJECTS**

The Navajo Nation Council hereby requests the U.S. Congress and the U.S. President to approve additional federal funds for Navajo water projects throughout the Navajo Nation for the benefit of the Navajo people, Navajo chapters, Navajo communities, and all persons residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.