TITLE: 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

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

Digital comments may be e-mailed to comments@navajo-nsn.gov

Written comments may be mailed to:

Executive Director
Office of Legislative Services
P.O. Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515
(928) 871-7586

Comments may be made in the form of chapter resolutions, letters, position papers, etc. Please include your name, position title, address for written comments; a valid e-mail address is required. Anonymous comments will not be included in the Legislation packet.

Please note: This digital copy is being provided for the benefit of the Navajo Nation chapters and public use. Any political use is prohibited. All written comments received become the property of the Navajo Nation and will be forwarded to the assigned Navajo Nation Council standing committee(s) and/or the Navajo Nation Council for review. Any tampering with public records are punishable by Navajo Nation law pursuant to 17 N.N.C. §374 et. seq.
DATE: October 25, 2021


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.
PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

24th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Third Year, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

[Signature]
(PRIME SPONSOR)

TRACKING NO. 0218-21

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

BE IT ENACTED:

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

A. The Naabik’iyati’ Committee is established as a Navajo Nation Council standing
committee with authority to review and continually monitor the programs and activities
of federal and state departments and to assist development of such programs designed
to serve the Navajo People and the Navajo Nation through intergovernmental
relationships between the Navajo Nation and such departments. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164
(A)(9), 700 (A), 701 (A)(7).

B. The Resources and Development Committee is standing committees of the Navajo
Nation Council with the authority to oversee all matters involving water, land, the
environment, community development, and public utilities, among others. 2 N.N.C.
§500(A) and (C).
C. The Budget and Finance Committee is standing committees of the Navajo Nation Council with the responsibility to “review and recommend to the Navajo Nation Council the budgeting, appropriation, investment and management of all funds.” 2 N.N.C. § 300(A).

SECTION TWO. FINDINGS

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

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

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

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

E. The Navajo Nation expends millions in Navajo Nation funds (Navajo Nation General Funds, Navajo Nation Undesignated Unreserved Funds, Sihasin Funds, other Navajo Nation funding sources, etc.), requests State funds (capital improvement projects, state matching funds, etc.), and requests Federal funds in order for the Navajo Nation
to provide water to the Navajo people, Navajo Chapters, Navajo communities, and all people residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation. The following federal agencies and departments are federal agencies that the Navajo Nation has requested funds from:

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

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

F. In June 2020, the Navajo Nation received $714,189,631 from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The funds are part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act payments to state, local and tribal governments approved April 27, 2020 by Congress and President Donald Trump. The Navajo Nation used CARES funding for infrastructure development which included water projects.

G. In May 2021, the Navajo Nation received approximately $1.86 billion American Rescue Plan of 2021. The Navajo Nation has received approximately $1.86 billion under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to further recovery from the coronavirus pandemic under the American Rescue Plan of 2021. The Navajo Nation plans to use the ARPA funds for infrastructure development, which includes water projects.

H. It is in the best interest of the Navajo Nation to request 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.
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.