



## Veterans legislation moves onto the Navajo Nation Council

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PHOTO: Hon. Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., presenting both legislations in the Navajo Nation Council Chambers.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Today, the Naabik'iyáti' Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0021-22 and Legislation No. 0024-22, both of which are sponsored both by Hon. Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. Both legislations would directly impact Navajo Nation veterans and the funding granted to local organizations.

“Throughout the previous months, the voices of our Navajo veterans and families have only grown and despite what has occurred in the past between organizations and leadership, I am committed to seeing our veterans, Gold Star Mothers, Blue Star Mothers, and their families receive the vital services they need,” said Delegate Begay.

Legislation No. 0021-22 would amend the selection process of the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director and amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council (NNVAC) to become the Navajo Nation Veterans Board of Commissioners with additional authority.

Legislation No. 0024-22 would amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund statute to require creating separate business unit numbers whenever Navajo Nation funds are awarded to local veterans' organizations.

“To all of our veterans across the Navajo Nation, I want to make it clear that providing transparency has always been a priority of mine,” said Delegate Begay. “The past two public hearings have proven successful in promoting dialogue between the Council and our veterans which was only possibly through tentative listening.”

Last week, a public hearing for Eastern Agency was held at the Navajo Technical University Wellness Center in Crownpoint, N.M. While the Western Agency public hearing was held at the Monument Valley High School Nash Auditorium in Kayenta, Ariz.

Both hearings allowed community members and veterans to express their concerns on not only the legislation but also the shortcomings with the NNVAC. A shared concern was the chain of command that leaves many veterans and veteran organizations on a local level without a voice to advocate better communication.

Both legislations are set to be discussed at the next Navajo Nation Council session and will require a two-thirds vote before going to the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President.

As we move forward, it is crucial for leadership and veterans to continue working together as we navigate the objectives and potential solutions,” said Hon. Speaker Seth Damon. “I want to thank every veteran and the various organizations for their patience as they have made the ultimate sacrifice in keeping our families and communities safe.”

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