



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Naa' bik'iyati' Committee supports increased funding for Navajo veterans programs and services

Window Rock, Ariz. - On Thursday, June 22, the Naabik'iyati' Committee approved Legislation 108-23, which seeks final approval from the Navajo Nation Council and President to allocate additional funding from the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund set-aside to Navajo veterans programs and services by amending Title 12 of the Navajo Nation Code.

The Veterans Trust Fund set-aside is funded through the Navajo Nation Council's allocation of four-percent of all projected annual revenues in the Navajo Nation Comprehensive Budget. Half of the four-percent is allocated for veterans programs, services, and benefits and the other half is allocated for the veterans housing program.

Since the establishment of the Veterans Trust Fund, the needs of Navajo veterans have increased but due to conflicting statutory interpretations within Title 12, the amount of funds available for veteran's programs and services has not met the needs.

The proposed language in the legislation would allocate more funds to Navajo veterans programs, services, and direct financial assistance. The remaining half of the four percent will still be allocated to the Navajo Veterans Housing Program.

"The 25th Navajo Nation Council has listened to the voices of our Navajo veterans who have called for increased funding of veterans programs and services while avoiding any shortfalls to these areas moving forward," said Council Delegate Carl Slater, who is the primary sponsor of the bill. He added that the legislation will benefit thousands of Navajo veterans who rely on the assistance through the Veterans Administration.

During last Tuesday's regular meeting of the 25th Navajo Nation Council's Budget and Finance Committee, Delegate Slater said the proposed amendments provide the "technical fix" needed to rectify conflicting language that was previously adopted in 2018 and 2021.

The Naabik'iyati' Committee approved Legislation No. 0108-23 with a vote of 18 in favor and zero opposed. The legislation now moves forward to the Navajo Nation Council for consideration.

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