



25th Navajo Nation Council

# 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Naa' bik'iyáti' Committee approves legislation to override Presidential veto of virtual attendance resolution**



**PHOTO:** Legislation sponsor, Council Delegate Vince James said that Legislation No. 0255-23 gives chapters the right to choose whether or not they will allow virtual attendance.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – On Thursday, the 25th Navajo Nation Council's Naa' bik'iyáti' Committee approved Legislation No. 0255-23 to override President Buu Nygren's veto of a resolution allowing for virtual attendance at chapter meetings.

Legislation sponsor and Chairman of the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, Council Delegate Vince James, said that Legislation No. 0255-23 does not mandate that chapters allow virtual attendance.

"It gives each chapter the right to choose whether or not they will allow virtual attendance and adopt their own virtual meeting policies," Chair James said. "The intent is to provide chapters with an additional resource to address issues like meeting quorum, meeting attendance, and community engagement."

During the 2023 Fall Council Session, the 25th Navajo Nation Council approved Resolution No. CO-85-23, an action amending Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code to allow for virtual attendance at chapter meetings.

Legislation No. 0255-23 supports the intention of the Local Governance Act by recognizing governance at the local level and empowering chapters to make these decisions.

On Nov. 3, President Nygren vetoed the resolution, and in a memorandum cited concerns over personal presence, virtual verification of chapter membership for voting, and a lack of community engagement.

The president's concerns had been addressed during the Fall Council Session when Council Delegates debated the pros and cons of the resolution. Many delegates cited circumstances of chapters not establishing quorum as a hinderance in attending to business.

"Allowing virtual attendance at chapter meetings is beneficial to establishing quorum which allows chapter business to keep moving forward," James said. "I believe it promotes community involvement in government at the chapter level."

The Naa'bi'iyáti' Committee voted 16 in favor and three opposed, approving Legislation No. 0255-23 to move forward to the 2024 Winter Council Session agenda.

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