

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: _0082-24_

SPONSOR: Casey Allen Johnson

TITLE: An Action Relating to an Emergency; Urgent Request to President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., the White House, Members of Congress, and Relevant Federal Agencies to Halt the Transportation of Uranium Through Navajo Nation Lands

Date posted: April 12, 2024 at 5:45PM

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0082-24

DATE: April 12, 2024

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION;
AN ACTION RELATING TO AN EMERGENCY; URGENT REQUEST TO PRESIDENT
JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., THE WHITE HOUSE, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND
RELEVANT FEDERAL AGENCIES TO HALT THE TRANSPORTATION OF URANIUM
THROUGH NAVAJO NATION LANDS

PURPOSE: The Navajo Nation people, lands, and water are to be safeguarded from the harms of transport of uranium ore across Navajo Nation lands. The purpose of this legislation is to urge President Biden, the White House, members of Congress, and relevant federal agencies to work to halt the transportation of uranium through the Navajo Nation lands.

Final Authority: Navajo Nation Council

Vote Required: Simple Majority

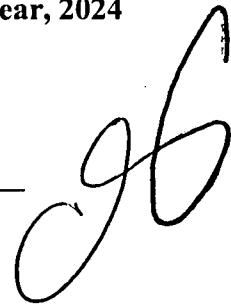
This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION

25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL—Second Year, 2024

INTRODUCED BY

Primary Sponsor



TRACKING NO. 0082-24

AN ACTION

RELATING TO AN EMERGENCY; URGENT REQUEST TO PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., THE WHITE HOUSE, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND RELEVANT FEDERAL AGENCIES TO HALT THE TRANSPORTATION OF URANIUM THROUGH NAVAJO NATION LANDS

WHEREAS:

- A. The Navajo Nation Council, the governing body of the Navajo Nation, pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 102(A), is entrusted with the responsibility to safeguard the interests, rights, and traditions of the Navajo People.
- B. The Navajo Nation has a government-to-government relationship with the United States government.
- C. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §164 (A) (16) matters constituting an emergency shall be limited to cessations of direct services required as an entitlement under Navajo Nation or Federal law, or which directly threaten the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation. Such emergency matters must arise due to the pressing public need for such resolution(s) and must be a matter requiring final action by the Navajo Nation Council.
- D. Uranium mining has a long and troubled history on Navajo Nation lands, dating back to the early 20th century when prospectors began extracting uranium ore, leading to widespread environmental contamination and health hazards for Navajo communities.

- 1 E. During the Cold War era, the demand for uranium surged, prompting extensive mining
2 operations on Navajo lands without adequate environmental safeguards, resulting in
3 lasting devastation to land, water, and public health, including high rates of cancer and
4 other illnesses among Navajo uranium miners and their families.
- 5 F. The Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005, enacted through Navajo Nation
6 Council Resolution No. CAP-18-05, prohibits uranium mining and processing on
7 Navajo lands, reflecting the Navajo Nation's commitment to safeguarding its people,
8 land, water, and culture from additional harms posed by the mining of uranium.
- 9 G. The Vehicles, Persons and Materials Transportation Act of 2012 enacted through
10 Navajo Nation Council Resolution No. CF-18-12, makes it illegal to haul or transport
11 radioactive and related substances, including uranium, within the Navajo Nation.
- 12 H. The Pinyon Plain Mine in the Kaibab National Forest in Arizona has recently increased
13 uranium mining activity and plans to transport the uranium ore across Navajo Nation
14 lands on Arizona State Route 89 and Hwy 160 to the White Mesa Mill in Utah.
- 15 I. Transportation of any uranium ore across Navajo Nation lands poses a significant threat
16 to the health, well-being, and cultural integrity of the Navajo Nation and its tribal
17 communities.
- 18 J. The Navajo Nation President and Speaker of the 25th Navajo Nation Council issued a
19 letter dated March 12, 2024 to President Joseph Biden of the United States to review
20 and deploy all available federal resources to prevent uranium mining transportation
21 through the Navajo Nation. The March 12, 2024 letter is attached as **Exhibit A**.
- 22 K. The transportation of uranium ore across Navajo Nation lands represents a disregard
23 for Navajo Nation law, threatens its territorial integrity and is a threat to the sovereignty
24 of the Navajo Nation. The need to halt plans to transport uranium across Navajo Nation
25 lands is a pressing public need which requires final action by the Navajo Nation
26 Council.

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28 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**
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- A. The Navajo Nation expresses its full support for the urgent request to halt the transportation of uranium through Navajo Nation lands, as outlined in the letter addressed to President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., dated March 12, 2024.
- B. The Navajo Nation calls upon President Biden and the White House to utilize all available executive authorities to address this critical issue and prevent further harm to Navajo communities.
- C. The Navajo Nation urges President Biden, the White House, members of Congress, and relevant federal agencies to publicly support legislative measures that reinforce tribal sovereignty and enable the Navajo Nation to enforce its laws and protect its people from the risks associated with uranium transport.
- D. The Navajo Nation requests President Biden and members of Congress to work collaboratively to halt the transportation of uranium through Navajo Nation lands.
- E. The Navajo Nation Council hereby authorizes the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, the President of the Navajo Nation, and their designees, to transmit a copy of this resolution to President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., the White House, members of Congress, relevant federal agencies, and other appropriate stakeholders to emphasize the Navajo Nation's urgent plea for action on this matter.
- F. The Navajo Nation hereby authorizes the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, President of the Navajo Nation, and their designees, to advocate for the purposes and intent of this resolution on behalf of the Navajo People.