



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Navajo Nation files lawsuit to extend voting hours in Apache County**



**Apache County voters in Chinle wait to cast their ballots.**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Today, due to consistent polling machine issues experienced by Navajo voters residing in Apache County, the Navajo Nation has filed a lawsuit against the State of Arizona to extend general election voting hours by two hours in Apache County.

The complaint cites Navajo voters being denied the right to vote due to malfunctioning machines, lack of printed ballots, long lines, lack of provisional ballots, being turned away due to long lines, improperly being turned away for providing adequate state identification cards, and polls not being operational or open during posted voting hours.

“Navajo people represent a powerful voting base and we’ve demonstrated in the past that we can change the outcome of state and federal elections. Today’s issues in Apache County are very troubling, but our Navajo voters should not be discouraged. We have to make our voices heard and ensure that our votes count,” said Speaker Crystalyne Curley. “We strongly urge the Apache County court and officials to support our request for an extension of voting hours to prevent the disenfranchisement of Navajo voters.”

The complaint seeks for the Apache County court to keep the polling places on the Navajo Reservation in Apache County to remain open until 9:00 p.m. and orders the defendants to take all necessary steps to ensure that any voters who arrive at the polling places after 7:00 p.m. and until 9:00 p.m. are permitted to vote provisionally and have their votes counted.

The issues began today as the polls opened across Navajo Chapters located in Apache County.

Council Delegate Carl R. Slater, a volunteer poll observer, was notified by his constituents that some polling machines were inoperable, printers were having issues, and that voters were being turned away due to not being listed on the poll books.

These issues caused long lines and frustration among Navajo voters.

"It's affected every single one of my chapters and every location across the county," Council Delegate Slater said. "I've heard several people say they were going to leave without voting."

These technical complications led to issues in Apache County where polling locations had run out of provisional ballots, and relied on ExpressVote voting machines, causing waiting times of more than 2 hours at some locations.

Speaker Crystalyne Curley, who visited many polling locations within Apache County, said that she noticed voters becoming frustrated at the lack of provisional ballots.

"I received calls like those referenced by Council Delegate Slater. Constituents were telling me that polling locations didn't have enough provisional ballots," Speaker Curley said.

Speaker Curley and Council Delegate Slater met virtually with Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes to address the Apache County polling issues. Secretary Fontes assured the leaders that his staff along with Apache County officials were working diligently to fix the situation.

"We let Secretary Fontes know about the issues we're facing within Apache County. This is not right. Everyone has the right to vote and should be afforded this right without any disruptions," Speaker Curley said. "The Navajo people have every right to go to a polling place and not be turned away."

Speaker Curley urges all voters who are still waiting to cast their ballots to be patient and if they are denied a provisional ballot, to call the Native Vote Hotline at 1-888-777-3831 or Apache Recorder's Office at 928-337-7515.

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